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## CONTENTS

	PAGE
EVENTS OF THE WEEK	763
BROADCASTING AND THE STATE	766
THE CRISIS IN EDUCATION. By Hubert Phillips	767
SIR AUSTEN EXPLAINS: AN IMAGINARY INTERVIEW. By Peter Ibbetson	769
MANAGING MUNICIPAL HOUSES. By the Chairman of a Housing Committee	770
LIFE AND POLITICS. By Kappa	771
LETTERS TO THE EDITOR: The Composition of the League Council (A.); An Inadequate Sentence (Corino di Basso); Liberalism and Labour (Ronald G. Perry); Trade Unionism (Arnold Lupton); Family Endowment (O. Vlasto); The Indian Mutiny (K. Burnett); "Murder in Fact and Fiction" (Joshua Brookes)	772
DIARY OF AN EASTWARD JOURNEY.—I. By Aldous Huxley	774
ART.— The French Gallery. By Roger Fry	775
All communications (accompanied by a stamped envelope for return) should be addressed to the Editor, THE NATION AND THE ATHENÆUM, 38, Great James Street, W.C.1.	
FROM ALPHA TO OMEGA. By Omicron	777
THE WORLD OF BOOKS:— Bad Dreams. By Leonard Woolf	778
REVIEWS:— The Education of Beatrice Webb. By Graham Wallas	779
The Place of Voltaire. By Kingsley Martin	780
Fiction. By Edwin Muir	782
Turkish Scenes	784
Chinese Baskets	784
Factory Legislation	784
ON THE EDITOR'S TABLE	784
BOOKS IN BRIEF	786
REVIEWS AND MAGAZINES	786
NEW GRAMOPHONE RECORDS	788
FINANCIAL SECTION:— The Week in the City	790

## EVENTS OF THE WEEK

THROUGHOUT Europe the League Council controversy has held the centre of the political stage during the past week, and very special interest attaches to the informal conversations which will take place at Geneva on Sunday and to the meetings of the Council and the Assembly next week. We go to press before Sir Austen Chamberlain makes his promised statement in the House of Commons, but throughout the week he has continued his stubborn fight against a united public opinion for a "free hand" to make, at Geneva, the best compromise he can between his own convictions or commitments and the wishes of the nation he represents. The plea put forward by Sir Austen that, if he is forced to take a definite line beforehand, the representatives of other States will do the same and a deadlock will ensue, was never very convincing, and has become utterly threadbare as, one after another, the other Members of the Council have declared their views. M. Briand stands, of course, for the Polish claim; Signor Mussolini has come down heavily on the same side; Herr Luther, the German Chancellor, has confirmed the conviction, so widely held in Britain, that the creation of other Permanent Members of the Council at the same time as Germany would strike at the heart of the Locarno Agreement; Sweden has reaffirmed its opposition to the whole project; and Belgium has taken the same line.

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The hopeful aspect of a very grave situation is that the unanimous vote of the Council is required to make a new Permanent Member, and the strong support of British public opinion may enable the Swedish representative to stand firm. The danger now is that a compromise may be put forward to placate France, and to save the face of Sir Austen Chamberlain. The particular compromise which is being discussed is that Spain should be elected to Permanent Membership at the same time as Germany, and that Poland should take Spain's place as a Temporary Member of the Council. This plan would avoid the gross affront to Germany and the ludicrous distortion of the League's executive organ which would be involved in Poland's appointment as a

Permanent Member, but on many other grounds it would be highly objectionable. Spain is not now one of the Great Powers, and her admission would inevitably lead to persistent intrigues for a like status by other nations. It is improbable, moreover, that the consent of Brazil, a Temporary Member of the Council, could be secured for the aggrandizement of Spain, if her own claim were rejected; and it is very doubtful whether the Assembly would consent to elect Poland to the Council if a vacancy were thus created. The more the matter is discussed, the more obvious it becomes that Sir Austen Chamberlain showed deplorably bad judgment in ever giving countenance to M. Briand's intrigue, that he has alienated public opinion by his obstinate refusal to admit his mistake and do his best to correct it, and that he ought not to be allowed to represent Britain at Geneva without categorical instructions to oppose any additions, other than Germany, to the Permanent Members of the League Council.

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There is reason to hope that the Cabinet is of this opinion; and that Sir Austen's "hand" will not be left as "free" as he desires. Another proposal which is being discussed, as we go to press, is far less objectionable. It is now suggested that, immediately after Germany has taken her place on the Council, a resolution should be adopted adding one elective temporary Member to that body. This would give the Assembly the opportunity of electing Poland to fill the vacancy, without displacing any of the six temporary Members already sitting, and it is logically defensible as maintaining the present proportion of elective to permanent Members. If France and Poland would be satisfied by this arrangement, and if it is acceptable to Germany and Spain, it may provide the best way out of the unfortunate controversy. An immense amount of wire-pulling will, however, be required to secure the election of Poland to the new seat, if it is created. It is one of the worst features of the whole intrigue that questions which ought to be settled with a single view to the efficiency and authority of the League must now be dealt with in an atmosphere charged with prejudice.

By Article 18 of the League Covenant it is laid down that:—

"Every treaty or international engagement entered into by any member of the League shall be forthwith registered with the Secretariat and shall as soon as possible be published by it. No such treaty or international engagement shall be binding until so registered."

Presumably, therefore, the terms of the agreement which has been negotiated between France and Turkey will be made known in due course. The sooner this is done, the better, if its contents are innocent, for the relations between France and Britain. The last thing to be desired is that the League Council controversy should be exacerbated by disagreement on Near Eastern policy. But it is confidently stated, in quarters that ought to be well-informed, that the basis of the Angora engagement is reciprocal neutrality in all circumstances. This seems almost incredible, as it would be incompatible with the terms of the League Covenant, and a clear statement that France intended to disregard her obligations under Articles 16 and 22. The latter Article is, of course, that which defines the powers and obligations of Mandatories, and the Mandates Commission will be called upon to scrutinize the Franco-Turkish Agreement in the interests of both Syria and Iraq.

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If, however, it can be established that the neutrality clause does not apply to disputes in which the League is involved, there is no reason why the agreement should be regarded as inimical to British interests. The Baghdad railway, which is far more a line of military communication than an artery of commercial circulation, runs through French territory in the district to the north of Aleppo; further on it is actually the boundary between Syria and Turkey. The situation is full of every sort of difficulty. First of all, what constitutes neutral or unneutral action with regard to troop movements on this strategic line? Ought the French to stop or limit transportation of troops on their section of the line when the Turks are engaged in operations in Kurdistan or Anatolia? Obviously a question such as this ought to be settled, and the settlement put on record in a formal treaty. Again, traffic on the line has often been held up by brigandage, and as the railway is in itself a boundary, the French and Turkish frontier guards have found it impossible to co-operate. These and other questions arising out of the extraordinary manner in which the boundary was drawn call loudly for regulation, and a definite settlement of them is imperative for the avoidance of future friction. The disquieting suggestion is that the terms of the agreement go beyond these legitimate issues.

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The real issue behind the Council question could hardly be illustrated more clearly than by Signor Mussolini's statement to a correspondent of the *PETIT PARISIEN*. The Italian dictator has, at least, the great merits of frankness, consistency, and clearness of statement, and the interview exhibits these qualities in a manner somewhat embarrassing to his admirers abroad. For Signor Mussolini, the war has changed nothing; there is a "Germanic *bloc* of eighty millions," and the only hope for the peace of Europe lies in counter-balancing this *bloc* by "a Latin mass." The admission of Germany to the League only transfers the struggle from one field to another. As Signor Mussolini is not an idiot, he must know perfectly well that his doctrine of the "balance of masses" has singularly failed to preserve the peace of Europe in the past. The truth

is that he does not believe in peace, and does not believe in the League except as a machine for perpetuating the domination of Europe by the Allies, and a theatre for intrigues and groupings on the old lines. The chief difference between him and some of his admirers and imitators in other countries is that he comes nearer to the admission of his real attitude.

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In January, we expressed scepticism as to whether Mr. Churchill was not talking at random in assuring the Leeds Chamber of Commerce that he would run through the financial year without any deficit beyond the amount of the coal subvention. Indeed, we then anticipated, with due reserves, a further deficit of ten millions. Fortunately, however, the recent returns of revenue and expenditure have made a much better showing than then seemed probable; and there is no longer reason to doubt Mr. Churchill's claim, which he repeated last Tuesday at Belfast. Possibly this satisfactory result may be partly explained by the allocation to the revenue of a portion of the surplus remaining from the liquidation of "ex-enemy" debts—a useful nest-egg to the Treasury, which they can bring into the accounts as it suits them. But in any case this is a perfectly legitimate resource to fall back upon, and it is necessary to withdraw the charges of general recklessness in budgeting which we had joined in levelling at Mr. Churchill. Apart from his repudiation of this charge, his speech at Belfast was chiefly remarkable (1) for his return to his note of some time ago that the possibilities of justifiable economy are very limited, and (2) for his insistence that the financial position of the country is not really at all desperate.

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On both these points we agree with Mr. Churchill. When people, forgetting our sinking fund, treat our financial position and our prospective deficit as though they were on all fours with the position and the deficit of France, it is pertinent to observe, as Mr. Churchill did at Belfast:—

"In no other country in the world would the word deficit be applied to the annual finances of a State which had not only paid the whole of its current expenditure and the whole of its debt charge out of revenue, but, in addition, had reduced its capital liabilities by between 30 and 40 millions in the current year."

And it would not be easy to better Mr. Churchill's reply to Lord Rothermere's anti-waste campaign:—

"I am sure if Lord Rothermere's solution of the three dictators were adopted, and if these unfortunate gentlemen went about the country saying: 'Cancel those ships, disband those regiments, close those schools, leave those pensioners to shift for themselves, break up your organization of unemployed insurance, let tuberculosis and other diseases run their course unchecked by the Ministry of Health, break faith with everybody in every direction that affects the interests of the working classes, but, above all, do not forget to pay the interest on our National Debt'—I am sure these commissioners would have a state of affairs in our streets in a very short time at which no one would be more shocked and startled than Lord Rothermere himself."

From all this, we may perhaps conclude that the economy bill, of which Mr. Churchill promises the introduction next week, will not be a very formidable affair.

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A further debate on the Steel House question in the House of Commons on Wednesday was marked by extremely conciliatory speeches from the Secretary for Scotland and Mr. Ramsay MacDonald, from which it appears that the issue between the Government and the building unions has been narrowed down to a small point. Mr. MacDonald's speech was remarkable for the unqualified manner in which, on behalf of his party, he not only welcomed the erection of the steel houses, but

repudiated the view that the engineering labour engaged upon them must be paid at building trade rates. He took his stand upon the Bradbury Report, which, as he interpreted it, envisaged the workers employed on these houses as constituting a new industry, neither engineering nor building, with the corollary that their wages and conditions should be specially determined by collective bargaining. He confined the claim for building trade rates to those workers who actually belonged to the building trades. This is a very reasonable attitude; and we hope that an amicable settlement of the points in dispute will now speedily be reached. The whole story, we think, reflects credit both upon the Government and on Mr. Ramsay MacDonald; on the Government, for their pertinacity in pressing forward with the matter in face of considerable opposition, and on Mr. MacDonald for the firmness with which he has resisted, at considerable risk of personal unpopularity, the adoption by his party, in a matter touching the vested interests which they represent, of a purely anti-social attitude.

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There is very little of the Locarno spirit amongst employers and employed in the engineering industry. Last week the Employers' Federation tried to induce the Unions to reconsider their decision to end the long-drawn-out national negotiations for £1 a week increase in wages. The Unions reaffirmed their previous decision, for after nearly two years of negotiations they have come to the end of their patience. Thereupon the Employers' Federation, dominated by Sir Allan Smith, brandished the big stick of a national lock-out, if any further wage claims, national, district, or local, were so much as advanced by the Unions. To show that this was not mere bluff, the Federation next decided to throw their whole weight behind the London firm of Messrs. Hoe, whose employees have been on strike over the employment of non-unionists and for an advance in wages, and national lock-out notices are to be posted this week-end. In so doing, the Federation have the justification that these strikers are breaking the agreements of their Unions with the Federation, and it cannot be said that the Unions have adopted disciplinary measures with firmness. The strikers may well have a genuine grievance against Messrs. Hoe on the non-unionist question, but that does not alter the fact that they are completely in the wrong in taking strike action. The threat of a national lock-out is, however, a bludgeon which is so awkward to wield in such circumstances that, as Sir Allan Smith should know, it may create very serious difficulties, while the threat of its use to prevent further wage claims is even more tactless. Engineering workers have long been and still are suffering bad times, and require to be handled with sympathy: bullying will merely cause trouble.

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The Navy and Air estimates both show some marks of the Government's intermittent zeal for economy; and it is understood that the Army Vote will reflect the same influences; but the savings are small, and the total expenditure on defence remains alarmingly high. We see little hope of a substantial reduction under existing conditions. If the Government are looking for economies, they would do well to turn their attention to the costly folly of Singapore; but this affects future commitments rather than current expenditure. The latest Return of Fleets (Cmd. 2590) certainly does not suggest that the present cruiser programme is excessive, and the idea that capital ships are obsolete appears to us to rest on a complete misreading of the lessons of the war. The real moral of the estimates is the urgency of international agreement for the limitation and reduction of armaments, and we hope that the supreme importance

of this problem will not be lost sight of in the discussion of technical issues or possible administrative economies.

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The debate on the Air Estimates was not particularly helpful, and we could wish that the speakers who referred to air power as menace to Western civilization had been a little more critical. That the constant threat of war is a menace to that civilization is true enough, but that menace will not be removed by an uncritical acceptance of all that is claimed by the advocates of air warfare *à l'outrance*. If air forces are to come within the scope of conferences on armament limitation, the first thing to be done is to get a clear idea of what an air force can do and what it cannot. An exaggerated confidence in the possibilities of submarine warfare on the part of some Continental critics is at present obstructing limitation of the minor naval types. An exaggerated, unmilitary view of the uses of air power is likely to produce similar results. An air force is an indispensable adjunct to naval and military operations; it can inflict deplorable but not decisive injuries on the civil population behind the lines; it can retaliate for injuries received, but it cannot prevent them by defensive action.

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Mr. Lang, the Labour Premier of New South Wales, is very angry. A few weeks ago he persuaded the Governor to appoint twenty-five new members to the Legislative Council in order to enable that body to vote itself out of existence. To his amazement, the Council, thus judiciously packed, refused to commit *hara-kiri*, and by 47 votes to 41 rejected a motion to restore the Abolition Bill to the business paper. The Governor, having expressed doubts as to whether he was constitutionally justified in repeating the process, Mr. Lang has now sent his Attorney-General, Mr. McTiernan, to London, for the purpose of obtaining a ruling from the Colonial Office. Inasmuch as Mr. Lang has only the narrowest of majorities in the Lower House, the abolition of the Second Chamber was certainly not a clear issue at the last State election, and Labour lost ground badly at the recent Commonwealth elections, Mr. Lang's reluctance to make a further appeal to the electorate can be easily understood; but such an appeal would certainly seem to be called for before the Governor is asked for any further exercise of his powers. But all Labour Parties have a weakness for stretching the prerogative.

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By the death of Sir Sidney Lee we have lost our most reliable guide through the difficult country of Shakespearean biography. His "Life," which has grown steadily through the years by the accretion of carefully sifted details, is not likely to be superseded until, if ever some happy scholar makes a prodigious find in the archives. He was a man of a notably cautious and conservative temper and of infinite patience in research. His lack of emotion and fancy stood him in good stead as the chronicler of Shakespeare's career. He had the right qualities, negative as well as positive, for the much-needed work of reducing the facts about Shakespeare the man to a reliable residuum. He was recognized as a sort of touchstone by which all new "discoveries" and theories were tested. Tact in selection and simplicity in presentation marked all his work, whether in English scholarship or in general biography. In writing his "Life" of Edward VII.—expanded from the D.N.B.—he acquitted himself honorably in a peculiarly difficult task, and he succeeded in telling the truth where truth telling was a delicate, even a risky, proceeding. English studies owe a great deal to him in several fields. Sir Sidney Lee was a man of great simplicity of character, and of devotion to an ideal of scholarly integrity.

## BROADCASTING AND THE STATE

**T**HIS is a week of marking time, of waiting on great events at home and abroad. The Council and the Assembly of the League of Nations meet next week at Geneva in circumstances critical to the shaping of European relations and to the future of the League itself. The forthcoming Report of the Coal Commission is likely to exercise an equally determining influence on the course of our domestic affairs. Upon neither of these matters of the first moment shall we comment further at this stage. There is, however, another matter of considerable importance, which is in a rather similar condition of imminent eruption. The Broadcasting Committee is expected to report almost immediately, and the contents of their report have not been guarded with the complete success which makes the Coal Report so intriguing a mystery. If the "forecasts" which have appeared this week in the leading journals are to be relied on—and they bear all the marks of authoritative inspiration—the Broadcasting Committee will recommend that the agreement with the B.B.C. should be allowed to lapse at the end of the present year, and that thenceforth broadcasting should become a State monopoly, controlled by Commissioners appointed by the Crown and responsible to the Postmaster-General.

We view this proposal with misgiving. Much, of course, will depend on the detailed form which it assumes. The arguments against subjecting the infant craft of broadcasting to a bureaucratic upbringing are so obvious and so overwhelming that it may be assumed that the Committee will seek to place their projected Commission as far as possible outside the ordinary administrative system of Whitehall. None the less it is a mistake, we think, to move at all in the direction of tightening the ties between broadcasting and the State.

The development of broadcasting is one of the outstanding phenomena of the present day. It is already a social and cultural force of the first importance. The bald fact that there are already in Great Britain 1,846,000 licensed holders of wireless sets is one of the most significant of our sociological statistics. As the author of "England's Green and Pleasant Land" has pointed out, the wireless has had the effect of bringing the inhabitants of our scattered villages for the first time into some kind of regular contact with the outside world. And for large masses of the urban population it means a new factor in their lives of hardly less importance. Day by day, through their crystal sets, hundreds of thousands of people receive music, information, instruction, and entertainment of an immeasurably higher quality than any that they would otherwise be likely to enjoy. It requires an effort of the imagination for those who have varied means of contact with every sort of intellectual and cultural activity to realize the part which the wireless already plays in the lives of others. And the whole development is amazingly young. Broadcasting is entirely a post-war affair; and the B.B.C., now threatened with demise, is not yet three and a half years old.

We have, indeed, as yet hardly begun to envisage the tremendous potentialities of this new invention. The spoken word is inherently a far more efficacious mode of communication than the written. Everyone is well aware how much more vivid and lasting is the impression left on the mind by hearing a lecture than by reading an essay in a magazine; so much so that people will still go to considerable trouble to hear an address which they know they will be able to read at leisure afterwards; and so that the lecture, despite Henry Sidgwick's denunciation of the waste of time it involved to all con-

cerned, is still the chief instrument of instruction in our Universities. Part of the superior efficacy of the lecture is, perhaps, explained by the stimulus of the sight of the lecturer and by the presence of other members of the audience; but certainly not the greater part. It comes easier to all of us to listen than to read, even to those of us whose occupations make reading far more habitual and therefore far easier than it can ever be to the vast majority. Only in the more abstract ranges of thought, where words indeed tend to give place to symbols, is it easier to follow what is written than what is said. For most purposes, the range of a man's apprehension is greatly enlarged when he can substitute the direct process of listening for the more complex and artificial one of translating printed letters into words.

The written word has, of course, certain advantages of its own—that of record, for example, which for many purposes is a consideration of supreme importance. But what has given it its present vogue as the chief organ of general publicity is the advantage which it has enjoyed ever since the invention of printing some four and a half centuries ago, namely, that it can reach a far wider audience than the human voice has hitherto been able to do. Broadcasting is manifestly destined to confer on the spoken word a similar power, and to open up for it innumerable possibilities of extended use. We can as yet imagine these possibilities only very faintly; but we shall be apt to go badly astray in our arrangements for regulating the new invention, unless we envisage it clearly as an invention in the same rank as that of printing, likely to exercise an equally far-reaching influence on that most essential element in human society, the converse of mind with mind. The first condition of dealing wisely with the multifarious problems of broadcasting is to realize that we cannot judge as yet how it may prove best to deal with them, and to eschew accordingly all arrangements which tend in the direction of rigidity, or which it may be difficult to alter. To approach broadcasting as though it were an ordinary public utility service, like the railways or the gasworks, and to apply to it without more ado precepts appropriate to such services, is to adopt an altogether too narrow standpoint.

We have been very fortunate, we think, in Britain in the system under which broadcasting has grown up. The B.B.C. comes in for a great deal of criticism, some of it perhaps attributable to the fact that the Press scents in it a dangerous rival. But it has succeeded in supplying at a very low price a service which is unquestionably superior, taking account both of what the public "wants" and of what is "good for it," to that available in any other country. Like so many of our successful institutions, like Lord's and the Bank of England, its constitution is anomalous in a high degree. The B.B.C. is a company owned exclusively by the manufacturers of wireless apparatus, and it is with these manufacturers that the control of its policy nominally rests. On paper, there could hardly be a body more ill-fitted for the wise direction of a public service of a non-material description. At many points the interests of the manufacturers may conflict with the interests of the public or with professional standards. It might have suited them, for example, to limit the facilities available for the users of crystal-sets, in order to stimulate the demand for the more expensive and more remunerative valve-sets. But, in fact, the B.B.C. has consistently pursued a "crystal-set policy." On all such matters, so far as we can judge, the B.B.C. seems to have placed its public obligations first, and to have conceived these obligations in a large-minded way. Much of the credit belongs presumably to the Managing Director, Mr. Reith, and to

the staff which he has gathered round him at Savoy Hill and elsewhere. A professional conscience has been established as a tradition which will not, we may trust, be easily shaken; and, this paramount need having been supplied, the urge of the commercial motive has in practice been entirely healthy. Just because Mr. Reith and his assistants have been unwilling to subordinate their high conception of broadcasting as a public service to the immediate pecuniary interests of their proprietors, they have felt it all the more incumbent on them to promote those interests, when there is no such clash, by the utmost energy and enterprise. A professional spirit, in the best sense of the term, has been harmonized, more successfully than it would have seemed reasonable to expect when the B.B.C. was born, with what is best in the spirit of a popular newspaper, constantly on the alert for new features which will help it to extend its sales.

If the B.B.C. is now to be transformed into a public authority, it is difficult to feel much confidence that this spirit will be preserved. Whatever arrangements may be devised to make the proposed Commission independent of the Government of the day, it seems inevitable that the spirit of avoiding at all costs anything which may cause a row will tend to creep in, and that the spirit of experiment and enterprise will tend to fade out. The B.B.C. has always, of course, been wisely cautious about introducing into its programme features which may cause controversy; but at the same time it is not averse from running risks. And risks of public outcry must be run, a constant tendency to experiment must be present, if we are to exploit the potentialities of this new invention to the utmost.

The references in the "forecasts" of the Committee's Report to finance emphasize, to our mind, the dangers of the change. The revenue of the B.B.C. has already been restricted by the Postmaster-General to a fixed maximum of £500,000, although its three-fourths share of the yield of licences would make a substantially larger sum. Rumours have been abroad for some time that a raid upon this half-million may be a feature of Mr. Churchill's economy plans, the argument being presumably that broadcasting must bear its share of the general retrenchment which has become essential. This seems to us to be an entirely wrong way of looking at the matter. Broadcasting is on a self-supporting, and more than a self-supporting basis, the 2s. 6d. of the licence charge which the State retains being much more than is required to defray the expenses of collection. As the public demand for it increases, and the revenue which it earns increases correspondingly, this increasing revenue ought to be available for the development of the service which earns it, and this development ought not to be held back by the momentary exigencies of State finance. The mere fact that the State is the intermediary through which broadcasting receives the revenue it earns may be an argument, though it is a poor one, for imposing a special tax upon it. But the restriction of its revenue to a fixed lump sum, to be reduced or increased in accordance with the stringency or the ease of the Budgetary position, is a restriction to which no industry has ever been subjected before; and the fact that the industry is only in its infancy makes the restriction all the more objectionable. Yet the automatic appropriation of "surplus" broadcasting revenue by the State seems to be one of the objects which the Broadcasting Commission has in mind; and the change to public ownership will clearly make it more difficult to keep the finance of broadcasting on a satisfactory basis.

But our chief misgiving arises from the consideration that it is too early to prescribe rigidly the system under which broadcasting can best develop; and that a State monopoly, once constituted, is a system which it is very difficult to revise. It would be much better, we think, to be content with amending the constitution of the B.B.C., so as to ensure that other elements besides the manufacturers are represented on the Board. For, after all, the tradition of the B.B.C. is a good one, and it is always a pity to risk losing a good tradition by an unnecessarily sweeping change.

## THE CRISIS IN EDUCATION

THE position in which Lord Eustace Percy, as Minister of Education, finds himself, under stress of recent circumstances, is anomalous and in some degree pathetic. His speeches, and to a less extent his actions, during this last year, have shown him to be a man who might, given favourable conditions, make a useful contribution to the development of educational policy. It is a little depressing, therefore, to see his status reduced to that of a ventriloquist's dummy. The gestures and the "business" of education are his, but the voice in which his recent pronouncements have been uttered is not; we have listened instead to the familiar accents of the Chancellor of the Exchequer.

"There is one comparatively small item," said Mr. Churchill, in an address broadcast from Leeds, "which has necessarily been disclosed before the others—I mean the policy in regard to education. That is the first small battle of the economy fleet which has ventured out of harbour, and what a storm it has encountered!" And he went on to defend the proposed policy ("It has only been proposals, not for reducing the burden upon the taxpayer on account of education, but for reducing the rate at which that burden is increasing"); to insist that the reduction in expenditure is a very modest one; and to urge in answer to the argument, "Is it worth while?" that "any sound or fair programme of economy must be applied all round." The general validity of this last contention, which is fundamental to Mr. Churchill's position, is worth a good deal more attention than, so far, it has received. For it is significant that the first vessels of the "economy fleet" to go into action should have been the clumsily constructed destroyer 1371 and the mysterious auxiliary 44—carrying torpedoes for education.

The controversy to which the Circular and the Memorandum have given rise has led to an unfortunate confusion of issues. There are really two quite distinct questions. One is the question of the basis upon which educational grants ought to be calculated. This is partly an administrative issue, upon which, in view of the obscurity which still surrounds the Government's intentions, and the non-appearance of the long-awaited Meston report, it is impossible to pronounce a final opinion. Those who best understand educational administration, however, are seriously perturbed by the changes that are threatened. But the second question is a simple question of principle: whether there is any case, at this present juncture, for "economizing" on education at all. And the danger is that, under cover of the confusion provoked by controversies about block grants and percentage grants, this—the fundamental question—will be permitted to go by default. The psychological setting in which a policy of reaction, masquerading as economy, has been staged, conduces precisely to that end.

Economy is a word that has only one intelligible meaning: the distribution of resources to the best advantage. The definition applies equally to the economy that we exercise as individuals and the economy that we exercise as a society. And in this business of distributing resources advantageously—so as to get, in terms of satisfaction, the maximum return—there are many considerations involved. We have not only to consider the claims of one kind of expenditure as against another, but also the needs of the future, as far as these are foreseeable, in relation to the demands of the present. All intelligent persons are conscious, in their own private conduct, of recognizing these facts. They are conscious, also, that some items of their expenditure are much more

necessary than others, and that the dictum that "any sound or fair programme of economy must be applied all round" is, in the sense in which Mr. Churchill makes use of it, preposterous. If I suffer a contraction of income, I may "economize" first on such items as golf, whisky and cigars; I shall have to be much more hardly pressed before I try to economize on house-room or on boots. Such items as my life insurance or my children's education are still less likely to come under the domestic axe; I may, in fact, if I am feeling uncertain about the future, think it well to make a special effort to spend more than I have been spending upon necessities such as these. I should have supposed, not only that all this is obvious, but that it is equally obvious that similar considerations apply to an organized society.

I am not ashamed to say that I think we could, as a nation, reasonably spend on education considerably more than we do spend, and that to do so would be a prudent investment of our resources. Our total educational expenditure to-day is rather less than £80 million and is probably less than 3 per cent. of our national income. A high proportion? Possibly. But our expenditure on drink, after deducting what goes to the State in the form of taxes, is somewhere about double this, and our expenditure on tobacco, also after deduction of taxes, is somewhere about the same. Fox hunting, it has recently been stated, costs us about ten million pounds a year; racing, I suppose, rather more—and if one takes into account its costly by-products—the horde of bookmakers, tipsters, and sporting journalists who are parasitic upon it, and the cost of the sporting journals themselves—very considerably more. Golf, a most valuable thing in itself, involves a degree of luxury expenditure on implements, fancy dress, and the wages of hangers-on, which is probably of the same order of magnitude; so also does motoring. And there are obviously many other forms of expenditure which are equally unnecessary. A great deal of competitive advertising, for example, is purely wasteful; and an enormous amount of printed matter is published, both in the form of periodicals and in the form of fiction, which has literally no value at all.

I am not, except in the light of my one central contention, concerned to criticize these things. Happy the nation that can afford plus fours for everybody. My point is solely that we could, if we wanted sufficiently badly to do so, easily increase the proportion of the national effort that is devoted to education, at the expense, if necessary, of what we now spend on luxuries, and without any detriment whatever to our economic position; and that it is essential, in the light of our responsibilities to the rising generation, to increase that proportion beyond the point at which it stands to-day. This is not the place to discuss our requirements in detail. But among urgent needs are included: the replacement of dilapidated schools (especially in rural areas); a continued reduction in the size of elementary classes; better-trained teachers; a much accelerated provision for secondary education; an extension of technical education; and—above all—a determined effort to tackle the problem of adolescence. Expenditure upon the first of these items is safeguarded to some small extent by the provisions of Memorandum 44; expenditure upon the others not at all.

It may, however, be objected that, since society is not run on communistic lines, the Government is not in the same position as the private individual whose case I have discussed; we cannot—we are told—avoid economizing on education, for the simple reason that we are faced with a depleted exchequer. The balancing of the Budget, even with these "economies," will be any-

thing but easy. Quite true. But the Government, though it cannot, we know, control the expenditure of individuals, can always determine—if it thinks it necessary to do so—the drift of expenditure of society as a whole. That, surely, is what the machinery of taxation is for. Given, then, a general agreement that expenditure on education is economically necessary, the business of the Government is to raise by taxation the money it requires just as it raises by taxation the money required for armaments. That this is exactly what Mr. Churchill does not want to do, goes without saying. And here, indeed, we reach the crux of our problem. The "economy fleet" of Admiral Churchill is putting out of harbour, not in defence of economy as an economist understands it, but in defence of a four-shilling income tax—a defence which is evidently to be as dogged and as resolute as naval traditions demand.

No one, as far as I know, wants to see income tax increased. But much of what has appeared in print, and has been spoken from platforms, about its disastrous reactions upon the economic position, is sheer hysterical nonsense. Another sixpence in the pound would, no doubt, have, as all taxation has, its economic disadvantages. But they would be slight compared with the ultimate consequences of a failure to make adequate provision for the needs of the next generation. Not, of course, that the cost of the educational services which it is proposed to do away with is measured by anything like 6d. in the £ on income tax; rather, I suppose, by a sum in the neighbourhood of 2d. For the sake of this much saving, and in defence of a "principle" that is not a principle at all, it is proposed to shatter the established continuity of educational policy and to hold up developments, upon the need for which thinking men—without distinction of party—are everywhere in agreement.

The final argument, in reply to all this, is that the new technique proposed (the block grant) will make the money available go much farther. "I am quite sure," says Admiral Churchill, "that there are a score of ways in which local authorities . . . will be able, if they really try, to keep within the limits of this sum, not only without reducing efficiency, but even by positively enhancing it." The view that he is combating is "apparently" (he tells us) "that educational progress is directly proportionate to the money spent upon it." It is true, of course, that one method of expenditure may be more economical—in the best sense of the word—than another. It is equally true that, when we know of a better method than the present one, it is our business to adopt it. But how does that affect the main argument—unless we are to understand that a technique has been discovered in terms of which returns are in inverse ratio to outlay?

A passage from "Alice in Wonderland," in this connection, drifts hazily across one's memory:

"I should like to buy an egg, please," she said timidly. "How do you sell them?"

"Fivepence farthing for one—twopence for two," the Sheep replied.

"Then two are cheaper than one?" Alice said in a surprised tone, taking out her purse.

"Only you must eat them both, if you buy two," said the Sheep.

"Then I'll have one, please," said Alice, as she put the money down on the counter. For, she thought to herself, 'they mightn't be at all nice, you know.'"

They might not. And it is just possible that it is eggs of this sort which are now available to customers in Mr. Churchill's emporium.

HUBERT PHILLIPS.

### SIR AUSTEN EXPLAINS AN IMAGINARY INTERVIEW

**R**EADING the "Life of Disraeli" the other evening, I came across this passage in a letter from Lord Malmesbury:—

"We have enough of the protectorate of Belgium, who will probably be invaded by one of its protectors, and now of the principalities, whose protectors are all pulling different ways. England always acts *de bonne foi* in these cases, and therefore has the disadvantage of being like a respectable clergyman co-trustee with five horse-dealers."

Closing the book, I reflected sleepily on this wise and witty remark. Was it quite fair to the other European States? I wondered. Did it not claim rather more virtue for Britain than she normally displayed? Had it any bearing on the Locarno Agreement? Was there not a danger that the "respectable clergyman" might be led into shady practices, by one or other of his co-trustees, through sheer ignorance of the wicked ways of the world?

I must have dropped off to sleep, for I was not at all surprised when Sir Austen Chamberlain, who is *not* one of my intimate friends, stepped on to my hearthrug and replied to my thoughts as though they had been addressed to him.

"The answer is in the negative," he began incisively. "Malmesbury's dictum has no bearing whatever on Locarno, and the danger you mention is non-existent. Foreign diplomats may have indulged in sharp practices in those days, but times, fortunately, have changed. The successful international statesmen of to-day are straightforward, simple-minded, plain-dealing men, like Mr. Lloyd George, M. Briand, Dr. Benes, and myself. The subtlety with which diplomats have always been credited is out of date, and international affairs are now conducted in a spirit of perfect trust and candour. The Russians and the Turks are, of course, exceptions to this rule, and the Germans still need watching; but, speaking broadly, the foreign statesmen with whom I have to deal are of the type I have described. It is to that that I attribute my success as Foreign Secretary. I should have been useless at the old game of intrigue. Indeed, my father once said to me: 'Austen, my boy, that wooden countenance of yours would make the fortune of a poker-player, or a diplomatist, but unfortunately you haven't brains enough to be either.' And he was perfectly right, of course, with respect to the qualifications needed for diplomacy in his day. He would have been surprised to see what I have been able to achieve."

"You astonished us all by your success at Locarno," said I, politely, "but haven't you got into rather a mess over this question of the League Council?"

Sir Austen's face clouded. "Not in the least," he replied, irritably. "I am being embarrassed by interfering people at home, if that's what you mean, but everything would have been perfectly all right if our plan had not been disclosed prematurely and misinterpreted by amateurs like the Editor of the *Times* and members of the House of Commons."

"How very annoying for you," said I, sympathetically. "What was your plan exactly?"

"Well, I'll tell you exactly how it arose," said Sir Austen, confidentially. "I was on my way home from Rapallo, where, by the way, I had a delightful conversation with Signor Mussolini who has all sorts of liberal ideas, and I had lunch in Paris with my good friend Quiñones, the Spanish Ambassador there, who is also the representative of Spain at League meetings. He is a charming fellow and was most helpful to us over

the Mosul affair. We discussed the entry of Germany into the League, and, to cut a long story short, he suggested that it would be very pleasant if Spain could be made a permanent member of the Council at the same time as Germany. Of course, I said it would be delightful, for Quiñones is an excellent colleague, and I should be very sorry to lose him if some other State happened to be elected instead of Spain. I was careful to add, however, that I could promise nothing, though I would certainly sound Briand on the matter."

"Quite so," said I.

"That same evening," continued Sir Austen, "I was dining with Briand and took occasion to mention the suggestion to him. To my great satisfaction, instead of raising all sorts of objections, Briand, with characteristic generosity, took very kindly to the idea, and even thought that we might go further and add one or two more States, say, Poland and Brazil, at the same time."

"I see," said I, "but didn't either of you think that Germany might object?"

"Certainly. I raised that point immediately," replied Sir Austen, with legitimate pride at his own pre-  
vision, "but Briand, who is a most experienced and resourceful statesman, as well as one of the best fellows alive, at once showed me the way out of that difficulty. 'There is no need to consult Germany,' he pointed out. At Locarno, we had only promised Germany a permanent seat on the Council, we had said nothing about Spain, Poland, or Brazil. We could wait until Germany had joined the League, and then elect all four countries to permanent seats on the Council simultaneously. He didn't see that Germany could have any legitimate grievance if that procedure were adopted, and he didn't see what she could do about it if she had."

"And did that answer entirely satisfy you?" I inquired.

"Not at first," admitted Sir Austen. "My first impression was that Luther and Stresemann would be inclined to resent the inclusion of Poland; but Briand urged, with convincing force, that any such attitude would be at variance with the spirit of Locarno, and that if German statesmen did indeed take that line it would prove that they were not altogether to be trusted, and would make it still more desirable to counterbalance their influence on the Council by including other States which were thoroughly reliable."

"So that clinched the matter, I suppose," said I.

"That clinched the matter," replied Sir Austen.

"And you promised to support the application of all three countries?" I asked.

"Well, I didn't exactly promise," replied Sir Austen, doubtfully, "at least, I don't think I did. We were talking in French, you know. I talk French very well, and it is a great help to me in diplomacy; but sometimes, when he is excited, Briand becomes eloquent and talks very fast, and I don't always catch every word he says. I know I pointed out that I should have to consult my colleagues, but Briand waived that aside and said that he well knew the perfect confidence placed in me by the British Cabinet, and that he was sure I should be given a free hand to deal as I thought best with any unforeseen emergency which might arise at Geneva. And that," added Sir Austen, mildly, "is all I am asking for now: just a free hand to do what I think best in the circumstances as I find them."

"Then you don't consider yourself bound by a promise to Briand," I asked.

Sir Austen's eyeglass flashed. "Do you dare to impugn my honour?" he asked angrily. "Of course I am bound by my promises, that is why I want a free

hand from the Cabinet and Parliament and the British public."

"Oh, is that all?" said I, looking intently at his eyeglass to see whether he was quite serious.

"That's all," he replied again.

Then an extraordinary thing happened. Sir Austen's eyeglass grew larger and larger until I found myself looking through it, as if through a window, at a large whitewashed room, scrupulously clean and completely empty.

"So that's all there is behind your eyeglass," I cried, and, in the effort, awoke.

PETER IBBETSON.

### MANAGING MUNICIPAL HOUSES

BY THE CHAIRMAN OF A HOUSING COMMITTEE.

THE management of municipal houses is one of the questions now being considered by a Special Committee of the Cabinet. This Committee has been set up in order to decide whether further legislation, with a view to dealing with rural housing and with slums, should be introduced this year, and better management is an important factor in both problems.

For some time past it has been obvious to members of Housing Committees in all large industrial areas that the ownership of municipal houses carries with it special dangers. There is, for example, always the possibility in districts where the municipality owns several thousand houses, of the tenants exercising their votes in an organized manner with a view to obtaining lower rents, regardless of the real interest of the community. In spite of municipal rents being comparatively low, "rent strikes," notably on the housing estates owned by the State, are not unknown, and this habit may easily spread to the 200,000 municipal houses.

In this connection, it is of interest to note that the average rent of the 173,325 houses that were erected in England and Wales under Dr. Addison's legislation, and are now occupied, excluding rates, is 9s. 8d. a week. If the Metropolitan area is excluded from this calculation, the average rent is 8s. 8d. per week. The average rent in the provinces for a cottage house without a parlour is 7s. 10d. a week.

With a view to the more efficient management of these houses, and in order to remove their control out of the atmosphere of municipal politics, Mr. Neville Chamberlain is considering the possibility of making it compulsory on all local authorities, who own house property, to set up Estates Management Commissions. Such Commissions would be composed of members who would be elected, or nominated, for a definite period of years, and who therefore would not be exposed to the possible temptations of promising lower rents in order to secure votes at municipal elections. This would, so it is believed, diminish the obvious dangers that lurk in the experiment, that has only been made on a large scale during the last seven years, of the ownership and management by local authorities of over 200,000 houses.

Apart, however, from the possible undesirable influences of municipal politics, it is believed that these semi-permanent commissions, especially if they include women, who have some practical knowledge of management problems, and are ready to keep in touch with tenants, would have a far-reaching effect for good upon existing property. The most interesting experiment in skilled and tactful management was initiated by Miss Octavia Hill in Marylebone in 1864, at a time when there were no Underground Railways, no trams, no

Board Schools, and when the few existing sanitary measures were rarely enforced. With the help of Mr. John Ruskin, who advanced all the money necessary, she bought three leasehold houses for £750. She then proved how property can be managed on a business basis and made to pay, and at the same time prevented from falling into bad condition. The house property belonging to the Ecclesiastical Commissioners in Lambeth and Southwark is a memorial of her work, and is well worth visiting to-day.

Her influence has extended far beyond London, where it is still on the increase. In Philadelphia there is an Octavia Hill Association which reports steady success, while the Municipality of Amsterdam some years ago appointed Women Managers to take charge of their municipal houses, and the first two women selected for this work had been trained under Miss Hill in London.

The secret of the success of her system of management is that the women who collect the rents are able to make friends with the tenants and encourage them to keep their homes in good repair. As they have practical knowledge, they can themselves often note some defect that, quickly remedied, will cost little. They can explain how fittings, such as gas-cookers and the other equipment of a house, should be properly used, and how, for example, water is wasted if washers are not renewed. They can persuasively insist upon the proper observation of any regulations laid down for tenants. In fact, the Octavia Hill system encourages co-operative self-management.

A valuable report on this system was issued some years ago by a sub-committee of the Women's Section of the Garden Cities and Town-Planning Association of which Lady Emmott was Chairman. This Committee believed "that the introduction of a suitable form of management, insisted on by some recognized authority, could have prevented the creation of slums in the past. They further believe that it may do so in the future, and that it can, with a special effort, eradicate much that is evil in present bad areas." The Committee examined many old properties restored to an excellent sanitary condition. Finally, the report stated that "in-efficient management is very largely responsible for the slums of to-day, and has led to the need for slum clearances, and in consequence to enormous expense to the community. The necessary effort to redeem slum areas now can only be successful by management on modern lines—a strong, efficient business equipment, based on definite ideals, with definite social aims."

The report appeared to arouse little interest except among the converted. It is true that the Birmingham City Council appointed a "Woman Rate Collector and Supervisor of Houses," and Leeds also moved. But any person who visits the tenements erected last year by the Glasgow Corporation for the accommodation of persons removed from slum areas can see how many of the rooms are rapidly deteriorating for lack of sympathetic supervision. Many local authorities are contented to collect the rents and merely maintain an appearance of respectability.

Mr. Neville Chamberlain, whose report as Chairman of the Committee that inquired into Unhealthy Areas contains much valuable evidence on the importance of trained management, has now apparently decided that the time has come for the State to make it obligatory upon local authorities who own house property to apply proper methods. Persuasion and suggestion have been largely fruitless. It is therefore probable that one result of the special Cabinet Committee now sitting will be to recommend the setting up of Management Committees, who

will include women, who will not be exposed to the shifting winds of municipal politics, and who will be able to apply on all municipal housing schemes principles of management that will help to ensure a high standard of repairs, and will encourage pride of home in all their tenants.

## LIFE AND POLITICS

**I**T is well known that Mr. Baldwin had a hard struggle to overcome the reluctance of Lord Irwin to give up English politics and, still more, English country life, for India. This reluctance is of good omen. India likes the professional "careerist" as little as we do. My neighbour at the British-Indian Union lunch the other day said to me after Lord Irwin had spoken: "This man is a cultivated and sensitive English squire. What on earth does he want to go to India for?" I could only reply: "He's going from a sense of duty." Lord Irwin's air of immobility and repression masks, if my impression is right, a very human spirit. Looking at him and hearing him speak, one has an instinctive confidence in him, as an understanding and reliable man. India will think none the worse of him because he treats party politics a little lightly, even contemptuously—as an illusion compared with the satisfying things of the countryside and its traditions. Stolid as he appears, he feels the poetry of the past, the oddities of the human record. India will respond to his sensitive interest in the deep unchanging life of her tradition and custom.

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For easy cynicism the behaviour of Sir Alfred Mond in relation to Carmarthen is a curiosity even in politics. He changes sides and places himself "unreservedly" in the hands of the Liberal Association. The Liberal Association asks him to resign. What does he do next? Replies in effect that his services are so valuable that he cannot bring himself to deprive Parliament of them. Sir Alfred Mond knows that a member who deserts his side and then refuses to stand again cannot be got at—he is safe from the resentment of those who trusted him. And Sir Alfred Mond is not the man to go out into the political wilderness—not so long as there is a drop of water in the oasis.

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Lord Rothermere almost persuades me to take the *DAILY MAIL*. His gift of Bethlehem Hospital to London as a park is a noble thing; one of the very finest examples of public spirit in my time. South London is miserably starved of open spaces. Seen from an aeroplane it is a desert of brick and slate almost unbroken—a desert in which reasonable mankind was not meant to dwell. Carelessness and greed combined have created in London whole districts—Shadwell is one—in which there is no single space to sit down in except a disused churchyard. In some parts of London the few ancient open spaces are threatened. It is not much use talking of throwing down the railings of the squares, for their very existence is in danger. It will be impossible to keep them out of the maw of the builder for very long unless London wakes up. The space is getting too commercially precious. Perhaps our best hope after all is in the enlightened millionaire doing from sentiment what collective intelligence ought to do from human necessity. The squares round about the Foundling Hospital are in immediate peril, and all praise to the L.C.C. for trying to "town plan" the district into some order and decency. If you travel on the Kent and Surrey outskirts you see the "tentacular town" swallowing up the green in the old remorseless way—without a vestige of plan or provision for any side of life but the need for mere shelter.

One who, like myself, obstinately regards the cinema as a cheap substitute for art cannot work up much enthusiasm over the opening of yet another gorgeous film palace in the West End. I would rather watch the worst set of amateurs doing something worth doing, however badly if with sincerity and feeling—and doing it in the flesh and in the spirit—than I would watch the best of these silent shadows. The film is the expression of the Mechanical Age, flourishing naturally in times of mass production. Its merit is cheapness; and it is useless for the theatres to complain of competition so long as they allow the rent profiteer to strangle them. I used to think the cinema craze would die out like other crazes, but the material advantages are too solid; the houses give cheap seats, shelter, and a kind of entertainment to too many poor folk. Clever people try to create an aesthetic for the film, but I question the possibility; it is born and ends in machinery. It was the discovery of Messrs. Lyons to exploit the splendour of surroundings in the interests of selling inexpensive food. The illusion of grandeur has commercial value in an age starved of true beauty. So these new Picture Palaces follow an ascending scale of garishness: and this week we marvelled at "a new wonder of lights," "a cupola gleaming with gold mosaic and alive with a cascade of golden water," old Italian furniture, and columns torn from an Italian Renaissance church (!). A satirist could make a pretty symbol of those ravished marble columns. There was a comic disparity between the frame and the picture. All that Neronic grandeur to lure us to see American stars murdering English history. The cinema is already dying of pretentiousness. If we must have the film give me Charlie Chaplin and *Felix the Cat*.

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It is a commonplace that the war had most unexpected effects in transforming people. Pacifists became furious patriots, and patriots became furious pacifists. Upon no one I can think of had the war a more transforming influence than upon the once implacable foe of statesmen who has returned to the scene of her passionate crusade after seven years' absence. The old passions, they say, have burned themselves out in Mrs. Pankhurst; the one-time Fury of Militancy has become mild, benignant, venerable. Meeting her now, you would never suppose that this was the woman who unloosed such fierce devotion, and made of unreason a dangerous political weapon. I have been a spectator at the tragicomedy of public life for a generation. The ascendancy of Mrs. Pankhurst and its results are things unique in my experience. When, during the Cat and Mouse period, she made a theatrical surprise appearance among her followers, the scene, with its rapturous abandonment to pity and indignation was amazing—almost terrifying. One understood for a moment the power of religious fanaticism, "the irresistible might of weakness." Mrs. Pankhurst worked on the emotions of women with cool mastery, and with a completeness which I confess used to fill me with fear and repulsion. I see that the claim is being revived that militancy won women the vote. I don't think that can be historically maintained. Women got the vote in the sentimental backwash of the war, after the big militancy had swallowed up the little militancy, and even made it seem virtuous.

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Mr. Bernard Shaw continues to spring surprises. Having exhausted the possibilities of Nonconformity he is, apparently, in this matter of the Censor and "Mrs. Warren's Profession," trying the effect of a little unwanted conformity. On hearing that certain additions, rumoured to be racy, had been made and that the Censor had insisted on modifications, the reporters gle-

fully trailed their coats before him. Instead of the expected cascade of defiance, Mr. Shaw was found in a state of what may be called indignant submissiveness. In prefaces, plays, and on the platform Mr. Shaw has castigated the Censorship for a generation, and now he meekly invites the blue pencil. I suppose even this immortal Playboy of the West End world must submit to the sobering touch of age, but it seems odd. It may be unkind to recall it, but I have never forgotten an earlier moment when Mr. Shaw was reduced to silence on the Censorship. It was when he gave evidence before the famous Committee. He spent one day doing to the Censor what he once announced he would do—and did—to Shakespeare. He "knocked him off his pedestal and kicked him about the place." The next day Mr. Shaw turned up at the Committee full of fight to answer questions. The chairman told him that his further attendance was not required. This remark was not brilliant, but it achieved the impossible. It silenced Mr. Shaw.

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Prince Antoine Bibesco's recall from Washington is probably only a prelude to an important diplomatic post elsewhere. Roumania is not so rich in representatives of talent and distinction to afford to dispense with his services. His departure is said to be the result of a dispute (not perhaps for the first time) with M. Titulesco, the Head of the Mission sent to Washington by the Roumanian Government to settle the Debt question. Unlucky are those diplomats who have to touch these matters! Half of them do their country no good by getting too sensitive to Washington opinion, and the other half by sticking up too obstinately for their own country's interests. Washington society, and not least English visitors there, will be the duller without the fine hospitality of Prince and Princess Antoine.

KAPPA.

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### THE COMPOSITION OF THE LEAGUE COUNCIL

SIR,—I have a friend in Paris who is intimate with high officials at the Quai d'Orsay; he is also connected with a famous Press agency. I wrote to him a few days ago, to ask if he could tell me anything about M. Briand's alleged intention to propose to "pack" the League Council against Germany. I have just received his reply, which he kindly permits me to publish through your columns.

"The statements that have been circulated in England," he writes, "are a curious misrepresentation of the true position. M. Briand, it is true, wishes to see the League Council enlarged. But he has no intention of pressing the claims of Poland, Spain, or Brazil to permanent membership. M. Briand is of the opinion, which he confidently anticipates will be supported by England, the champion of small States, that the Council has been dominated hitherto by the Great Powers, to a greater extent than is desirable; and the election of Germany to a permanent seat would, taken alone, increase this excessive dominance. What is needed, in M. Briand's view—and in this he is supported by responsible opinion in French Governmental circles—is the addition of a few carefully selected small States, to whom permanent seats should be offered; in this way the rights of small States would be secured for all time, and the balance of the League Council readjusted. M. Briand has some particular States in view. He points out that, at present, Africa has no direct representation on the League Council—a grave defect. No one State in Africa can be shown to have a claim superior to another, so the selection may fittingly be made alphabetically. Abyssinia is now officially known as Ethiopia; so it no longer comes first. South Africa, under its French equivalent, Afrique du Sud, comes first in the Assembly roll; but the French Government, with characteristic courtesy, admits on this occasion that a British State should be called by its English name. Algeria, therefore comes next: that is, first. Then, again, one of the smallest States of the world, to which statesmen, financiers, and others frequently resort, namely, Monaco, would appear to be an ideal choice. It is recalled that Mr.

Joseph Chamberlain once won some money in the Casino; so the proposal is a peculiarly graceful compliment to the distinguished son of a distinguished father. Finally, it is believed that not even the victors of Trafalgar and Waterloo will deny that the election of Corsica would be a fitting tribute to the memory of Europe's greatest international statesman, Napoleon Buonaparte."

My friend asks me to deny the rumour, current in some circles, that Monaco, on her election, will ask Mlle. Lenglen to represent her on the Council. It is taken for granted in well-informed quarters in Paris that Algeria, Monaco, and Corsica will all give their mandates to M. Briand. The only possible difficulty that Paris can see is that Signor Mussolini may decide to propose Tripoli, Sardinia, and San Marino. Such a proposal would certainly destroy the newly formed Latin bloc.—Yours, &c.,

A.

### AN INADEQUATE SENTENCE

SIR,—I see that an Englishman in Florence has been condemned to eight months' imprisonment for speaking disrespectfully of Signor Mussolini. With all respect, I cannot think the sentence at all sufficient; is it likely that the blasphemer would be converted in that period? If the term were lengthened to eight years, I believe that in that time every particle of his body would be renewed, and there would be some hope of the necessary changes taking place in the brain, but, secondly, it is surely not enough to put an end to this disrespectful language only in Italy itself, or even in Italy and Switzerland. If people in England are allowed to go on saying what they think about Signor Mussolini the infection will spread; cannot the offence be made extraditable? I feel sure that if the Italian Government would undertake to provide the necessary prison accommodation—ten million places would suffice as a beginning—we might well arrange to send all English offenders to Italy to be judged and punished. I venture to think that this plan would not only serve the interests of justice and due reverence for the great; it might also completely resuscitate British shipping.—Yours, &c.,

CORNO DI BASSO.

February 25th, 1926.

### LIBERALISM AND LABOUR

SIR,—At last—in Mr. Keynes's article—there is some expression of Liberal opinion on this subject which a Labour man can answer without heat and without lack of dignity; sincerity and common sense are worthy of being met by sincerity and such common sense as one may possess.

Firstly, on a point of fact, any "working arrangement" that would receive Mr. Snowden's and the Labour Party's assent could only be of a purely "Parliamentary machinery" nature. This is to correct wrongful deductions being drawn from Mr. Keynes's statement.

The whole of Mr. Keynes's argument that the only alternative to a twenty years' or so expanse of Conservative Government is an economic catastrophe, is based on the two premisses that one-third of the seats in the House cannot be captured by the Liberals nor one-half by Labour. But he simply states his disbelief in these possibilities, without giving any of the reasons which have led him into that state of disbelief. This is very unconvincing, both in view of the remarkable growth of Labour during the past ten years and the sensational collapse of Parliamentary Liberalism; all the more that in both cases, particularly the latter, the seats held or gained were not representative proportionally of the votes behind them. Mr. Keynes's claim to stand on the left of Messrs. Webb, Thomas, and Wheatley, and the average Labour voter, may be true to some extent, but he cannot fairly claim to carry his party with him. Lord Oxford, in saying with Mr. Hilton Young that Liberalism is the antithesis of Socialism (just that section of Labour with which Mr. Keynes proclaims his sympathy), surely more nearly voices the sentiment of the mass of the party. And in any case that surely does not prove the greater attractiveness of his views to the average members of either party.

The gibe at the "tyranny" of the Trade Unionists when most of them are already beaten down on to a standard of

living so desperately low that our home trade suffers from a chronic lack of effective market, is surely rather a cheap scratch for Mr. Keynes's classic pen; in his reference to the beauties of class-war, too, Mr. Keynes must know that he is deceiving his readers with a pharisaical phrase.

Finally, let us accept the statement that the great political problem of mankind is to combine Economic Efficiency, Social Justice, and Individual Liberty. Mr. Keynes leaves Social Justice as the best possession of the great party of the proletariat, but reserves the other two as requiring the qualities of that party which . . . has been the home of Economic Individualism and Social Liberty.

Does Mr. Keynes not agree that the age of Economic Individualism is rapidly passing, whether Socialism come or no? Is it not clear that the debate is no longer "private versus State enterprise," but "bureaucracy and monopoly for private gain" versus a "democratically owned and managed organization"? And as for Liberalism and Social Liberty, in all fairness let us admit that Liberalism may justly claim Political Liberty as its own child; but economic liberty is a vastly different problem, and one of which Liberalism can hardly claim to hold a monopoly: a problem the very existence of which Liberalism has only recently recognized after half a century of Socialist propaganda had popularized it.—Yours, &c.,

RONALD G. PERRY.

47, Richmond Grove, Longsight, Manchester.

#### TRADE UNIONISM

SIR,—In the interesting article on the Land Conference in your issue of Feb. 27th, the writer says: "If Liberalism is not for Trade Unionism it is a backward sort of Liberalism."

Of course, every Liberal would wish the agricultural labourers to have as many Trade Unions as they liked to pay for, but the question in my mind is will these Trade Unions do them any good? At the present time the Government has taken on old-age pensions, medical attendance, out-of-work pay, and one would gather that the Trade Unions devote most of their energy and the greater part of their funds to political work and to assisting their members in bargaining with their employers for wages and hours of work. The theory is that a single man is in a weak position for bargaining with the employer of a thousand men, and that therefore it would be to the advantage of the single man to belong to a powerful Union, and this argument is so obvious and strong that very few people can stop to consider whether or not the workman gets all the advantage he expects, and whether his Trade Union gains cover the costs of his subscriptions.

There is, however, another point of view, something like this: Every employer recognizes the power of the Union and the immense loss entailed on himself by a contest, and therefore will not risk a contest if he can help it. The result is that in many cases discipline is slack, bad work is permitted, slow work is tolerated, costs increase, the article produced is inferior, profits go down or disappear, capital ceases to offer in that business, then come unemployment and reductions in wages. I should say that the more profit an employer can make the better for his men. Employers making a profit bid against each other for workmen. Until the war there was, as a rule, a demand for more men in almost every branch of manufacture and production, and our trade was increasing more rapidly than it had ever increased before. I think there is no evidence that Trade Unions have increased the average earnings of Englishmen, and I think it is probable that their action has greatly reduced the average wage of British workmen. They are continually producing a condition of uncertainty and unrest. The Union agents find it necessary to excite suspicion and hatred of the capitalist and so to oppose the holding by the workmen of shares in the industries where they are employed and other arrangements calculated to produce or increase a friendly feeling.—Yours, &c.,

ARNOLD LUPTON.

7, Victoria Street, Westminster, S.W.1.  
March 1st, 1926.

#### FAMILY ENDOWMENT

SIR,—In view of the sections on Family Endowment in the questionnaire of the National Liberal Inquiry, many of your readers will doubtless wish to study the question in detail.

The Family Endowment Society, which includes members of all political parties and which was formed to collect and disseminate information on strictly impartial lines, would be glad to supply literature or speakers on the subject, or to provide information on any particular point.—Yours, &c.,

O. VLASTO

(Hon. Sec., Family Endowment Society).

24, Tufton Street, S.W.1.

February 20th, 1926.

#### THE INDIAN MUTINY

SIR,—Your issue of January 2nd contains a review of Dr. Thompson's "The Other Side of the Medal." I venture to think that either the book or the review of it is misleading. According to the review the book seeks to find an explanation for what is alleged to be want of measurable gratitude on the part of Indians for the benefit of British rule, and also for the fact that educated Indians are essentially irreconcilable.

After twenty-six years of intimate association with many educated Indians, I am convinced that Indians as a rule are not really ungrateful nor really irreconcilable. They may not go about saying how grateful they are, and a few, who wish to attract attention to themselves, may even boast of ingratitude, but after all nobody wishes to have it constantly dinned into him that his present condition, be it prosperous or otherwise, is entirely due to somebody else's godfatherly interest. I wonder what sort of success modern English parents would make of their families if they spent their time reiterating what they had done for their children, or allowed themselves to feel aggrieved if the children did not spend their time expressing their eternal gratitude.

It is probably safe to assume that Indians are measurably grateful, but that is no reason why they should not desire to be out of leading strings, and because they give expression to this wish there is no reason to assume that they are entirely irreconcilable.

Even supposing the views attributed to Anglo-Indians were tenable, the suggested explanation will not help very much for a large part of India which did not feel the effects of the Mutiny, and which is perhaps not the least vocal in the demand for self-government.

Personally I do not think that the Indian of the present day dwells any more on such excesses as may have been perpetrated in the suppression of the Mutiny than the average Englishman dwells on the horrors of Cawnpore. When we meet, as we constantly do, we meet as friends with identical standards of conduct in such matters.—Yours, &c.,

K. BURNETT.

Hyderabad, Deccan.

#### "MURDER IN FACT AND FICTION"

SIR,—As the author of "Murder in Fact and Fiction," I must ask the favour of being permitted to protest against your reviewer's statement of the book containing anything either nasty or dirty, and I challenge him to produce any sentences from the book to justify his very damaging assertion. To show the unreliability of many reviews, I may add that the *Observer*, *EVE*, and I think the *DAILY GRAPHIC*, have taken the very opposite ground of my being too strait-laced and unsophisticated.—Yours, &c.,

JOSHUA BROOKES.

February 21st, 1926.

[Our reviewer assures us that in using the words "nasty" and "dirty" he had no idea of casting aspersions on Canon Brookes's treatment of his subject; and if the words convey this impression, we offer our sincere apologies to Canon Brookes, whose attitude throughout the book is impeccable. The words were intended to apply exclusively to the facts about blood and blunt instruments which inevitably abound in police-court stories; and although he is not squeamish about those facts, our reviewer ventured to question whether their bare record could make a book of any imaginative or scientific value.—ED., THE NATION.]

## DIARY OF AN EASTWARD JOURNEY

BY ALDOUS HUXLEY.

## I.

**P**ORT SAID.—The after-hatch was off. Hung high above the opening, the electric lights glared down into the deep, square well of the hold. The watcher, leaning over the brink of the well, shouted and waved his arms. The donkey engine rattled responsively. Twenty sacks of potatoes came rushing up from the depths. Ten feet above the level of the deck, they were swung sideways by the transverse pull of a second rope, hung suspended for a moment beyond the gunwale, then, at another signal from the watcher, dropped down into the waiting lighter. The watcher raised his hand again; again the engine rattled. Two empty loops of rope came up over the ship's side, whipped across the deck and went down, writhing like living snakes, into the well. At the bottom, far down, little men caught at the trailing ropes, piled up the sacks, made fast. The watcher shouted. Yet another quintal of potatoes came rushing up, swung sideways, dropped out of sight over the edge of the ship. And so it continued, all the night. Curiously, admiringly, and at last with a growing sense of horror, I looked on. Moving bits of matter from one point of the world's surface to another . . . man's whole activity. . . . And the wisdom of the East, I reflected, consists in the affirmation that it is better to leave the bits of matter where they are. Up to a point, no doubt, the sages of the East are right. There are many bits of matter which might be left in their place and nobody would be any the worse. These particles of ink, for example, which I so laboriously transfer from their bottle to the surface of the paper. . . .

We landed . . . in what a sink! At Port Said they speak all languages, accept every currency. But their exchange is robbery, and they employ their gift of tongues only for cheating. The staple industry of the place seems to be the manufacture and sale of indecent photographs. They are stocked in almost every shop; they are pressed upon you—at prices that decline astonishingly, as you walk away, from a sovereign to half a crown—by every loafer. The copiousness of the supply is proof of a correspondingly large demand for these wares by passing travellers. In these matters, it seems, many people are more agreeably excited by the representation—whether pictorial or verbal—than by carnal reality. It is a curious psychological fact, for which I can find no complete explanation.

**I**N THE RED SEA.—Talking with Europeans who live and work in the East, I find that, if they love the East (which they mostly do), it is always for the same reason. In the East, they say, a man is somebody; he has authority and is looked up to; he knows all the people who matter, and is known. At home, he is lost in the crowd, he does not count, he is nobody. Life in the East satisfies the profoundest and most powerful of all the instincts—that of self-assertion. The young man who goes out from a London suburb to take up a clerkship in India finds himself a member of a small ruling community; he has slavish servants to order about, dark-skinned subordinates to whom it is right and proper to be rude. Three hundred and twenty million Indians surround him; he feels incomparably superior to them all, from the coolie to the maharaja, from the untouchable to the thoroughbred Brahmin, from the illiterate peasant to the holder of half a dozen European degrees. He may be ill-bred, stupid, uneducated; no matter. His skin is white. Superiority in India is a question of epiderms. No wonder if he loves the East. For the European, Eastern conditions of life are a kind of intoxicant. But the tipsiness they produce is more satisfactory than that which results from the absorption of whisky. Alcohol, as the anonymous poet has said,

"Bids valour burgeon in strong men,  
Quickens the poet's wit and pen,  
Despises fate."

But the sense of power which it gives, the feeling of grandeur and importance are purely illusory and do not

last. The intoxication of the East is permanent, and the sense of greatness is not entirely an illusion. The commercial traveller who goes East is really a greater man (so long as he remains in the East) than his colleague in patent medicines at home. Sobriety supervenes only when he returns to Europe. In the West he finds his natural place in the social hierarchy. One out of London's suburban millions, he feels homesick for the East. It is not to be wondered at. What man likes to be sediment, when he might float gallantly on the sunlit surface?

Everybody on the ship menaces us with the prospect of a very "good time" in India. A good time means going to the races, playing bridge, drinking cocktails, dancing till four in the morning, and talking about nothing. And meanwhile the beautiful, the incredible world in which we live awaits our exploration, and life is short, and time flows stanchlessly, like blood from a mortal wound. And there is all knowledge, all art. There are men and women, the innumerable living, and, in books, the souls of those dead who deserved to be immortal. Heaven preserve me, in such a world, from having a Good Time! Heaven helps those who help themselves. I shall see to it that my time in India is as bad as I can make it.

**BOMBAY**.—On the quay, awaiting the disembarkment of their relatives on board our ship, stand four or five Parsi ladies—all ugly, as only members of that exclusive, inbred race can be ugly. They wear Indian saris, with European blouses, stockings, and high-heeled canvas shoes. In one hand they hold black umbrellas, in the other garlands of flowers. The black umbrellas are for use against the sun; the wreaths of tuberoses and oleanders are to hang round the necks of their returning friends. One of the ladies, we are confidentially informed, is an eminent woman-doctor.

A dozen coolies, thin-limbed like spider-monkeys, are drafted to wheel up the gangway. They lay their hands on it, they simultaneously utter a loud cry—in the hope, evidently, that the gangway will take fright and move of its own accord. But their faith is insufficient; the gangway does not stir. Sadly, with sighs, they make up their mind to shove. A vulgar, commonplace, and tiring method of making things move. But at least it works. The gangway rolls across the quay, is hoisted into position. Passengers begin to leave the ship. The friends and relations of the Parsi ladies at last come down the plank. They are embraced, lassoed with flowers, and led off to the attendant Hupmobiles and Overlands behind the Custom House. It is our first view of the East.

The brown skins, the bare feet, the nose-rings, the humped bullocks—all these things were foreseeable, seemed obvious and familiar from the moment of landing. The really odd, unexpected thing about Bombay was its birds. There are more birds in the streets of this million-peopled city than in an English woodland. Huge kites, their wings spread and unmoving, go soaring along the thoroughfares, effortlessly keeping pace with the traffic below. Innumerable grey-headed crows fly hither and thither, sit perched on every roof, every sill and wire. Their cawing is the fundamental bass to every other sound in Bombay. Kites and crows do useful scavenging work, and Bombay, which produces much garbage and few dustmen, keeps them well employed and copiously fed. Nobody, in this land where the killing of animals is all but murder, does them or their nests any harm. They increase and multiply, they are astonishingly unafraid. All over India we were to find the same abundance of bird life, the same trustful absence of fear. Coming from Italy, where, for nine months of the year, while *la sport* is in progress, the countryside is almost birdless, where armed men lie ambushed half a day for a hedge-sparrow and migrant warblers are netted and eaten by the thousand—coming

from Italy, I was particularly impressed by the number and variety of Indian birds.

Architecturally, Bombay is one of the most appalling cities of either hemisphere. It had the misfortune to develop during what was, perhaps, the darkest period of all architectural history. Most of its public buildings were designed and executed between 1860 and 1900. It is hardly necessary for me to say more. All that need be said has been said perfectly in the guide book; then, let the guide book speak. The Presidential Secretariat, we are told, is in "the Venetian Gothic style." The University Hall (completed 1874), which is "in the French Decorated style of the fifteenth century," rubs shoulders with the "Early English" Law Courts (opened in 1879). The University Library, harking back to an earlier century than the Hall, is "in the style of fourteenth-century Gothic." The Old General Post Office "was designed in the mediæval style by Mr. Trubshawe." (Mr. Trubshawe was cautiously unspecific.) The Telegraph Office (date not mentioned, but my knowledge of architectural fashions makes me inclined to a rather later epoch) is "Romanesque." The Victoria Station, of which the style is "Italian Gothic with certain oriental modifications in the domes," confronts the Municipal Buildings, in which "the oriental feeling introduced into the Gothic architecture has a pleasing effect." More frankly oriental are the Gateway of India ("based on the work of the sixteenth century in Gujarat"), and the Prince of Wales Museum ("based on the Indian work of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries in the Presidency"). The Hotel Majestic and the Taj Mahal Hotel do not receive a description from the guide book. But they deserve it. The Majestic is more wildly Mohammedan than anything that the most orthodox of Great Moguls ever dreamed of, and the gigantic Taj combines the style of South Kensington Natural History Museum with that of an Indian pavilion at an International Exhibition. After an hour passed among these treasures of modern architecture, I took a cab, and in mere self-defence drove to the Town Hall, which is a quiet, late-Georgian affair, built in the 'thirties. Long and low, with its flight of steps, its central pediment, its Doric colonnade, it has an air of calm and quiet decency. Among so many architectural cads and pretentious bounders, it is almost the only gentleman. In Bombay, it seems as good as the Parthenon.

In the lounge of the hotel is a bookstall, stocked with periodicals and novels—my own, I was gratified to see, among them. One whole section of the bookstall is devoted to the sale of English and American technical journals—but technical journals of a single, rather special kind. Journals of gynaecology, of obstetrics, of sexual psychology, of venereal disease. Rows of them and dozens of copies of each. The hotel lounge is not specially frequented by doctors; it is the general public which buys these journals. Strange, strange phenomenon! Perhaps it is one of the effects of the climate.

From its island body, Bombay radiates long tentacles of suburban squalor into the land. Mills and huge grey tenements, low huts among the palm trees flank the outgoing roads for miles, and the roads themselves are thronged with the coming and going of innumerable passengers. Driving out of Bombay along one of these populous highways, I felt, but more acutely, that amazement which often overwhelms me when I pass through the sordid fringes of some European city—amazement at my own safety and comfort, at the security of my privileges, at the unthinking and almost unresentful acceptance by millions of my less fortunate fellow beings of my claim to be educated, leisured, comparatively wealthy. That I and my privileged fellows should be tolerated by our own people seems to me strange enough. But that our pretensions, which are still higher in India than in Europe, should be allowed by these innumerable dark-skinned strangers, over whom we rule, strikes me as being still more extraordinary.

We are accepted much as paper money is accepted, because there is a general belief that we are worth something. Our value is not intrinsic, but borrowed from the opinion of the world. We live and rule on credit and are respected, not because we are really formidable; we

are not. In India, as elsewhere, humanitarian principles have prevailed, and the Government dare not use the ruthless and systematic severity by which alone sedition can be kept in check. If there is no sedition in the native States, that is due, not to the fact that they are better administered. It is due to the ruthlessness of the despotisms prevailing there.

Our paper currency has begun to lose its conventional value in Europe. We still continue to offer ourselves (often with a certain secret disfidence) as five-pound notes; but the more sceptical of our "inferiors" refuse to regard us as anything more precious than waste paper. When the same thing begins to happen in India, when the credit on which the white man has been living and ruling for so long is withdrawn, what then? Without any violence, merely by quietly refusing to accept the white man at his own valuation, merely by declining to have anything to do with him, the Indian can reduce British rule to impotence. Non-co-operation has failed, up till now, owing to inefficiency of organization and a lack of public spirit on the part of the Indians. But efficient organization and public spirit are the products of a special education. When the masses have received that education, when the paper money of European prestige is discredited and individual Europeans are boycotted and left suspended in a kind of social and economic vacuum, the Indians will be able to get whatever they ask for. (The mere disappearance of all Indian servants would be almost enough in itself to bring the white man to terms. Faced with the prospect of having to empty his own slops, a Viceroy would begin to listen with an increased sympathy to Swarajist demands.) Whether the Indians will succeed any better than the English in the task of governing India, is another question. Swaraj may prove a blessing, or it may turn out to be a catastrophe. But in any case it will be obtained whenever a sufficient number of India's three hundred and twenty millions make up their minds systematically to ask for it; the thing is obvious. They have only to be consistently incredulous of the white man's pretensions, they have only to ignore his almost invisible presence among their multitudes; that is all.

In the meantime, however, our credit holds, at any rate among the masses. The educated Indian may doubt whether our five-pound notes are worth more than an equal area snipped out of the *DAILY MAIL*; but his uneducated brother still accepts us at our face value. Thin-legged pedestrians salute me as I pass. Through the squalor of suburban Bombay, I carry my privileges of comfort, culture, and wealth in perfect safety. They are still secure, more or less, even in the suburbs of an English manufacturing town. For how long? Rolling along between the palm trees, I wonder.

## ART

### THE FRENCH GALLERY

THE miscellaneous collection of pictures now on view at the French Gallery is labelled "Ingres to Picasso." It is none the worse for being miscellaneous. Indeed, it is from the accidental confrontations of such collections as these that one learns most. Here new lights on the relative position of the great names surprise one into revising afresh for the hundredth time one's theories and assumptions. Ingres indeed comes in only in one or two drawings, but his *bête noire* Delacroix is seen as perhaps never before in London in the exhilarating composition of an "Episode in the Greek War of 1856" (No. 17). I scarcely know another picture in which the peculiar qualities of Delacroix as an illustrator, as a composer, and as a colourist are shown to such advantage. As an illustrator his point of departure is romantic literature with its inevitable reference, whenever it is fully visualized, to the stage. We have plenty of documentary evidence that Delacroix went to the East, we know that he drew from life Janissaries, Suliots, Dervishes, and Sheikhs, and that he took careful notes of all the properties essential to the realistic presentation of oriental subjects, but nothing in his pictures

would force us to believe he had ever left Paris, nothing ever gets us away from the feeling of the circus and the footlights. All his accuracy of detail only seems to convince us more firmly than ever of the theatrical conventionality of what he paints. He is so theatrical that no trace of drama can survive the completeness of his *mise en scène*.

It is as well to get this clear from the first so that we can sit back in the stalls and enjoy the full splendour of the make-believe without any absurd hankering for dramatic conviction. So only can we accept without a murmur the excessive carousing of horses, brandishing of scimitars, and fluttering of pelisses; accept too, and this is perhaps more important, the curious unreality of Delacroix's colour. For in this respect also he is essentially theatrical. It is only behind the footlights that local colours stand out in this sharp glowing intensity with this curious varnished and shimmering transparency. Delacroix is always considered as a great colourist, and undoubtedly he thought and felt much about colour, undoubtedly too he attempted to use more intense local colours than had been done for a long time, but he was not, I think, one of those who discover harmonies of compelling and indisputable authenticity. I can always conceive before a Delacroix that a shift of colour pitch this way or that in any particular note might not be amiss, but before Corot's "Honfleur" (No. 6) it would be madness to think of the slightest change of a single note, so entirely satisfying, so fatally inevitable does the harmony appear. Here, indeed, is one of those mysteriously perfect chords in which every note gets a new meaning and resonance. The fact that this harmony is made by a few almost neutral greys, buffs, and degraded blues is of no consequence; the imagination is more thrilled by them than by Delacroix's turquoise blues and crimsons. Or again, if you turn to Cézanne's portrait of his wife (No. 5), you see the same magical effect by which every note of colour takes on a new significance for the mind by its relation with all the others; and here the delight in relatively pure colours is not denied; the vinous reds of the dress sing out upon the lemon yellows of the chair and the aqueous blue greys of the background.

All the same in this battle-piece Delacroix achieves, or nearly achieves, something quite definite and something which no other picture in the room attempts. To describe what this is I must use a simile and call it colour orchestration. The local colours here maintain a separate and distinct quality almost as definite throughout their various changes as the tamers of flute, oboe, and violin in a symphony. But though they keep their separate tamers they are not merely opposed one to another as in a primitive or in a stained-glass window. They all suffer in common the accidents of light and shade and pass through many gradations, so that, while each tamer is maintained, they yet fuse to make a whole unbroken texture. This colour orchestration already begun by the Venetians of the sixteenth century was brought to perfection in the seventeenth and found in Rubens its greatest exponent. What Delacroix did, though very rarely with anything like the success of the present example, was to go back to Rubens. It must be admitted, however, that he introduced some new and very refractory tamers into his scheme, notably his greens and peacock blues.

It is strange that Delacroix should be regarded as a pioneer of, as the precursor of modern colour, when in fact his face was turned towards the past and he was trying to recapture the sumptuous richness of decorative effect, and the "musical" quality of Rubens's work. Modern painting has turned away from that ideal, and through Impressionism has found a new meaning for colour in its relations to the construction of volumes in space.

With what desperate earnestness, what almost pathetic industry, that new idea was pursued may be seen in Seurat's extraordinary "Jeune femme se poudrant" (No. 41). This is, indeed, one of the strangest pictures I know. The point of departure seems so utterly remote from the result aimed at. This impossible woman in the grotesque dishabille of the 'eighties, sur-

rounded by every horror of gimcrack finery of the period, might have inspired Daumier to a grim satire or Lautrec to an indulgently ironical epigram half-witty and half-lyrical, but Seurat treats it with religious solemnity and carries it all into a region of abstract beauty. The design is affirmed with an almost oppressive decision. We are forbidden to imagine the slightest tremor of change in these impeccable contours. By incessant revision the position of everything has been ascertained down to the minutest fraction. At first it seems to be all surface—contours revealed by spots of pure but elusive colour—and then these almost imperceptible changes of colour build up for us solid volumes bathed in a faint glowing light. There is scarcely any true contrast, no definite light and shade, and yet in the end these volumes assert themselves with overpowering completeness. See how beside this the colossal forms and monstrous limbs of Picasso's "Mother and Child" look like airy trifles. For all its decorative flatness, for all its theoretical and abstract colouring, this is intensely real, but for all its reality nothing of the original theme, of the thing seen, remains untransmuted, all has been assimilated and remade by the idea. And perhaps this complete transmutation of the theme by the idea is the test of great art. It means that in proportion as a picture attains to this independent reality and inherent significance the element of illustration drops out altogether and becomes irrelevant.

The Cézannes proclaim the same truth. It would be absurd to begin to inquire what the real Mme. Cézanne was like, before the strangely impressive formal harmony of the picture which professes to be her portrait. No one would want to go and see those nondescript and half-ruined buildings beside a stream spanned by an iron bridge which compose the extraordinary spatial melody of "L'Aqueduc" (No. 3). For all its realism it is a landscape that belongs entirely to the world of the spirit. Though there is no deliberately imaginative pretext as in Giorgione's "Tempest," it is just as remote as that from actual life. It is hopeless for analysis to explain why these banal forms have so violent an effect on the imagination just by reason of their relative positions. One can no more conceive how they came to be in these relations than one can admit the possibility of their being otherwise. That is the point, a perpetual surprise continually resolved into complete acceptance.

Courbet, though he comes much nearer than Delacroix to this total transfiguration of the theme, does not attain to complete purity. Something is left of the original stuff. But that he should come nearer to the independence of great art is instructive, for Delacroix set out deliberately from the beginning to create in the world of the spirit, whereas Courbet believed naively in realism and the direct imitation of nature. In fact he touches the imagination almost exactly in proportion as he is absorbed entirely in the thing seen. He painted his "Baigneuse endormie" (No. 10) with a passionate intensity which carries one entirely away from the actual world, but when he sought the adventitious aid of a poetical *mise en scène* and borrowed the poetical clichés of rocks and overhanging boughs and water, he went near to destroying the illusion, for these lack the consistency and intensity of the nude and belong altogether to another world. They do not, it is true, fall away so utterly as the "poetical" setting of Corot's "Venus au bain" (No. 9). What a tragedy that the man, who could get so clear away into the realms of the spirit when he sat down patiently before the commonplace reality of Honfleur, should have ever condescended to this absurd and factitious business of deliberate poetical invention, and should land us thereby plump in the grossest actuality.

But to return for a moment to Courbet—for one cannot leave unnoticed his superb "Portrait of Mme. P." (No. 11). Here, at least, Courbet followed his principles unfalteringly and faced squarely this plump, self-satisfied Victorian landlady in her violet dress with her hands folded serenely on the antimacassar of the best armchair. It is magnificent in its uncompromising assertion of form, its complete realization of the volumes.

One is tempted at first to accuse Courbet of a malicious allusion to the Daguerreotypes of the period, but in the end one must acquit him of that. He is, after all, entirely serious. By his heroic acceptance of the brute facts of the situation he has come through to an imaginative ecstasy of acquiescence, so that this is no mere imitation, but a recreation by the spirit and in accordance with its demands.

I have no space to discuss many interesting pictures. Degas's "Racehorses" is an astonishingly original and successful design, but it is a pity that he ever tinted this fascinating drawing. Renoir is seen only in one phase, and that not his best; Sisley has, as usual, the peculiar distinction of his scrupulous restraint. Picasso leaves one troubled with doubt in spite of the undeniable charm of his "Maternité." Gauguin and Van Gogh seem strangely out of place in such good society as this. I do not say they always would be, but the examples seen here strike a very discordant note.

ROGER FRY.

## FROM ALPHA TO OMEGA

"IS ZAT SO," at the Apollo, is a quite raw American comedy, which it is very well worth while seeing. Some persons may be teased by the extraordinary jargon in which it is written, and for which the glossary thoughtfully provided by the management is quite inadequate. Still one can understand half of what is said and invent the rest, which is what happened to most of us at the Pirandello season. "Is Zat So" may not be a very good play, but it is an extremely good "show." The Americans certainly seem to act very much better than anybody else, and in Mr. Robert Armstrong and Mr. James Gleason we are presented with two first-class comic actors. The love-scenes between "Chick" Cavan, the boxer, and his "wren," the nurse, far transcend the limits of low comedy and touch on the beauty that is too deep for tears. The spectacle of these two speechless, helpless creatures, wracked by a passion they are unable to transmute into words, was genuinely moving, and the acting reached a point of "naturalness" that made one ashamed of being in the theatre at all during such intimate moments. The boxing scene was also extremely well done, and was a triumph for the producer. "Is Zat So" should be sure of a good run.

\* \* \*

"Palladium Pleasures" is an astonishing entertainment which shows how the great heart of the British Public has been happily unaffected by that distressing cynicism which is supposed to be a feature of the age. I should like to compel Mr. Bernard Shaw and other persons, who think they have "been of use," to visit this Revue. It would make them realize their own unimportance. The house must hold some thousand persons, who cheered themselves hoarse when the "Soldiers of the Queen" was sung to the accompaniment of Guards and bagpipes, who marched by across the enormous stage. I wonder what Lord Rothermere would have said had he witnessed such a "turn" in Germany. Absence of repentance was stamped on every gesture. But, most incredible of all, into the middle of this nice, old-fashioned performance was jammed a ballet, representing the combined efforts of Mr. Banting, Mr. Doone, and M. Dolin, with everything highbrow about it; the ballet is well worth seeing. The choreography is original, and, despite its inadequate presentation, Mr. Banting's *décor* was full of charm. Unfortunately his scheme had not been very well carried through, and the lighting was everything that might not be desired. But one saw enough to hope that this interesting new combination may be given another run for its money under more favourable circumstances.

\* \* \*

The Three Hundred Club, which gave a performance at the Lyric Theatre, Hammersmith, last Sunday, exists solely "to produce the first plays of young English authors." The object, of course, is to allow authors to see what their plays look like; but to see failures is also of extraordinary interest to other young playwrights. Thus Mr. Gerald Bullett's "Mr. Godly Beside Himself"

rubbed in a good many lessons which the optimism of the young seems to wipe out every day. Or, as M. Gide has remarked, "Toutes choses sont dites déjà, mais comme personne n'écoute il faut toujours recommencer." Well, recommençons! Firstly, a play must have an end, and cannot finish in a misty confusion. Secondly, you cannot treat the symbol as though it were life, and put it next door to life. The symbol must emerge from life so that you cannot define exactly where the one begins and the other ends. Thirdly, if you insist on stressing your symbolism, and describe an ideal beauty, it must be something more than "All the beautiful things of the world, sunlight and moonlight and distant bells, rustling leaves . . . and naked babies." Perhaps that sort of thing will just do for "Hannele." Fourthly, a construction that will do for a novel, will by no means do for a play; it is doubtful, even, if the elements are the same. Fifthly—but space is limited. Mr. Bullett has a certain skill in dialogue, but his mind does not seem very clear as to what its function is. The play was produced at a funereal pace, which rather increased the tedium, but at least it gave Mr. Russell Thorndike an opportunity for one of his best displays of the macabre.

\* \* \*

Life in Cambridge grows more and more dramatic. In addition to revivals like the Marlowe Society's "Edward II." next week, plays written by members of the University have now begun to appear—last term "War at Wittenberg," by Mr. Watkins of King's, and last week "Mountebanks," by Mr. Birch, fellow of that college. Despite the frowns of purer scholarship it is surely excellent that the University should thus be trying once more, as in the sixteenth century, to bear its share in the dramatic activity of the age. "Mountebanks," a play of fifteenth-century Italy, was acted with a vigour worthy of its author, who not only wrote but produced his play and took one of its chief parts. Mr. Birch is at his best in representing characters in rapid action; and the feature in his work most liable to criticism is a tendency to clog this energy with too many words, with philosophical disquisitions, or with irrelevant episodes. A modern audience looks forward more than an Elizabethan and grows unhappy in a play of this type, when the action ceases visibly to progress, whether the obstruction be a sermon or a carnival. Secondly, Mr. Birch's talent for farce tempts him at times to turn into a rag what, the next moment, he wants us to take as seriously as possible. But there can be nothing but admiration for the skill in handling beings of flesh and blood as well as of fancy, which enabled him, under particular difficulties, to get from his cast such enthusiastic work.

\* \* \*

### Things to see or hear in the coming week:—

Saturday, March 6.—"Edward the Second," Marlowe Society, at Cambridge.  
 Isabel Gray, Piano Recital, at 3, at Wigmore Hall.  
 Sunday, March 7.—"Tartuffe," Renaissance Theatre, at the Playhouse.  
 "The Napoleon of Notting Hill," Play Actors, at the Regent.  
 Viscount Astor on "Fundamentals of Drink Reform," at 3.30, at the Guildhouse, Eccleston Square.  
 Monday, March 8.—"The Cenci," matinée, at the Empire.  
 Professor Ernst Herzfeld on "Sasanian Sculptures," at 5.15, at School of Oriental Studies.  
 Tuesday, March 9.—"From Morn to Midnight," at the Regent.  
 Wednesday, March 10.—Recital of Contemporary English Music, Piano Quartets, &c., at 8.15, at Grotian Hall.  
 Professor Gilbert Murray on "The Personality of Gibbon," at 5, at London School of Economics.  
 A. B. Walkley on "Jane Austen," at 5, at 40, Upper Grosvenor Street.  
 Thursday, March 11.—St. John Ervine on "The Reading of Plays," at 8.30, at Mortimer Hall.  
 Friday, March 12.—Chenil Chamber Concert, at 8.30, at Chenil Galleries.

OMICRON.

## THE WORLD OF BOOKS

## BAD DREAMS

WHEN I read history, and particularly the history of foreign affairs and international relations and the great wars which have done so much for the glory and happiness of civilized nations, I often have a curious mental experience. I do not share the common opinion that books about international relations are dull. The detailed story of diplomacy and foreign policy in the nineteenth century is to me fascinating. The subterranean struggles and manœuvres, in which everyone has everything to lose and nothing to gain, combines the tragic grandeur of an *Æschylean* tragedy with the subtle mystery of the best modern detective novel. The ridiculous Kaiser strutting to his doom in Potsdam reminds one of the figures whom the Greeks loved to set up for the gods to laugh at, and M. Hartwig, plotting in the Balkans, would make the fortune of a detective-story writer. The game which these creatures play is as intricate and as interesting as chess, and to study the network of treaties and to try to unravel it is far more entralling than a good acrostic or crossword puzzle. So when I read the inner history of the Congress of Berlin or of the Moroccan crisis or the colossal involved epic of the Triple Alliance and Triple Entente, I soon get carried away; I follow with what journalists call "breathless interest" the tale of great events, the ebb and flow of nations, the perilous feat of maintaining a "balance of power," and the superhuman efforts of those supermen, called statesmen, the outcome of which may mean the difference between Empire and national annihilation. And then suddenly I suffer a strange intellectual revulsion. Suddenly the vision vanishes and the whole thing seems to me idiotic, the hallucinations of madmen, the incoherence of a bad dream.

\* \* \*

I have never experienced this revulsion so often or so acutely as in reading "The International Anarchy, 1904-1914," by G. Lowes Dickinson (Allen & Unwin, 17s. 6d.). It is very much the best analysis of the international events, leading to the great war, which has so far appeared. It is also, on the whole, the most impartial. Mr. Lowes Dickinson is not impartial, in the sense of not having a view of his own to put forward. His book is written with a purpose and to point a moral. He rubs that moral in continually—some people may think, too persistently. But he always gives you the bare facts first, and, therefore, the opportunity of disagreeing with him. His account of the diplomacy of the Triple Alliance and Triple Entente is given chronologically and in considerable detail. No one who has not tried to push his way through the jungle of treaties, State papers, books, and memoirs dealing with the ten years from 1904 to 1914 can have any idea of the difficulty of writing a readable and intelligible history of the period. Mr. Dickinson's account is masterly; it omits, I think, nothing of first class importance, and includes nothing irrelevant; it is absolutely clear and (I can only speak for myself) extremely interesting.

\* \* \*

Mr. Dickinson is, however, rightly more interested in the moral than in the facts. The gist of the moral is contained in the title of his book. He believes that science has made modern war incompatible with civilization, and that the next war will be a war to end, not war but, civilization. His book has, then, a purpose:

to show that the war of 1914-1918 was not due to the criminal policy of any man, group of men, nation or group of nations, but to the international system, the system of organized international anarchy which all the statesmen and States of Europe pursued from 1878 to 1914. And his moral is that, if we do not want another war with the inevitable destruction of civilization as we know it, then we must prevent the re-establishment of that international anarchy.

\* \* \*

I only hope that the younger generation will read and digest the book. I cannot understand how any reasonable person can deny its conclusions, yet I know that 80 per cent. of the middle-aged and the old do deny them. And that leads me back to my first paragraph. If you stop half-way or three-quarters way through Mr. Dickinson's book and consider for a moment what all this is about, what the actual things and realities are for which these great statesmen were struggling and plotting and staking the lives of millions and the existence of nations—if you consider this question as calmly and coldly as you would the question of a man who asks you the nearest way from Charing Cross to Waterloo, you can give but one answer: "Nothing more substantial than the delusions of a bad dream." I cannot prove my statement in twelve hundred words, but I am convinced that the whole of the foreign policy of Europe from 1878 to 1914 was based upon complete delusions which no rational man—if he allowed his reason to function—would accept for one moment. That is the reason why every statesman (except Bismarck) was always wrong in his judgment of the effect of every event of first-class importance, why they were always everywhere backing the wrong horses, why the whole of history is a grim mockery of their plans, intentions, and promises. It is almost inconceivable that people can look round the world to-day and compare the results with the promises of the statesmen of the Triple Alliance and Triple Entente—those promises of what would happen if we entered the Entente and fought the war to end war and to establish democracy or if the Germans stood in shining armour by the side of Austria or fought the war to break the "policy of encirclement"—it is almost inconceivable that people can see this and still believe that these hallucinations are realities. Personally I do not believe that there was a single statesman's object of any war fought in the last hundred years which was worth the bones, not of a Pomeranian Grenadier, but of a stray cat. And if I am asked for a reason, I answer: "Compare the condition of Europe and of the 'object' after the war and before it." But then I take precisely the opposite view of reality from Isvolski (and other European statesmen) who said of the proposal for disarmament: "It is a dream of Jews, Socialists, and hysterical women." The balance of power, prestige, national honour, national "friendships" or "enmities," economic advantages, imperialism—examine them as they appeared first in the minds of the Isvolskis and then in the actual world of men and women, and you will see that they are complete and often meaningless delusions, catchwords of irrational passion, the grotesque ingredients of that nightmare which we call international history.

LEONARD WOOLF.

## REVIEWS

## THE EDUCATION OF BEATRICE WEBB

My Apprenticeship. By BEATRICE WEBB. (Longmans, 21s.)

It is very fortunate for the science of history that Mrs. Webb has kept up, for the fifty-three years since she was fifteen, the habit of writing, two or three times a week, a diary of her intellectual and emotional life; and that her life has been spent in contact with many of the central personalities of those movements which have divided the England of Palmerston and Thackeray from the England of to-day.

The book which she has now published is based on extracts from her diary, connected and explained, but never modified, by her present knowledge and memory. It covers the thirty-four years from her birth in 1858 to her marriage in 1892. It begins with an account of an introspective and unhappy childhood, with poor health and little regular education, but under the constant stimulus of innumerable books, of intimate talks with her father and her father's and her own life-long friend Herbert Spencer, and of the more casual conversation of the scores of able men who came and went in the town and country houses of Richard Potter, his clever wife, and his nine striking daughters. The maturity of expression in certain self-communings written at the ages of ten and fourteen is already astonishing. Soon, like many other clever girls, she has to face the alternative, either of denying the reality of mystical experiences which she feels to be necessary for her, or of accepting the morally and intellectually incredible "scheme of salvation" of orthodox Anglicanism; and, more fortunate than most, succeeds at last in organizing her inner emotional life without tying herself to a creed. Meanwhile she is growing up, travelling from time to time with her father, and constantly tormented by a struggle between the duties and temptations of social success, and the "tireless intellectual curiosity" which drove her towards a life of intellectual production. At the age of twenty-four she loses her mother, and becomes her father's confidential secretary and the manager of his large household. At the same time she undertakes at intervals the work of "rent collecting" to which her sister Lady Courtney had been introduced by Miss Octavia Hill, and gets to know the Barnetts at the recently founded Toynbee Hall. In July, 1884, she is still a Conservative and individualist, and writes in her diary: "I object to these gigantic experiments, State-education, and State-intervention in other matters, which are now being inaugurated, and which flavour of inadequately thought-out theories." At the same time she is doggedly determined to acquire the knowledge of facts which would enable her adequately to think out her own position. She not only toils at acquiring personal knowledge of working-class life, but writes (in 1885) that she means "some day to master, as far as my power goes, what is theoretically thought out in social questions." H. W. Nevinson met her at that time, and wrote of her as "a rather hard and learned woman, with a clear and analytic mind." But she struggles against hardness. "Perhaps the past year of suffering will decrease my egotism," she writes in 1885, "and instead of cold observation and analysis, all done with the egotistical purpose of increasing knowledge, there will be the interest which comes from feeling, and from the desire humbly to serve those around me."

In 1885 her father's health broke down, and she began a course of life which lasted for the seven years till her marriage, doing social investigation for four months of the year, and reading, and nursing, and managing her father's household for eight months. In 1886 she agrees to help during her holidays her cousin's husband Charles Booth in his great inquiry into London Life and Labour, doing with wonderful thoroughness Dock Labour in 1887, and the Sweating System in 1888. She becomes well-known by her "Pages from a Work-girl's Diary" (describing her experience in an East-End sweater's shop) in the NINETEENTH CENTURY of October, 1888, and by her management of that House of Lords Committee on the Sweating System, which, after being started by an ignorant newspaper stunt, became, as was said at the time, "as clay in the hands of the Potter." In February, 1889, she meets John Morley, and writes: "In his speeches he asserts that the social question

is the one thing to live for . . . and yet he has evidently never thought about social questions; he does not know even the A B C of Labour problems. Oh! ye politicians." In 1889 she begins a serious study of Co-operation; and in this inquiry she reveals for the first time, with the help of J. T. Mitchell, to the organizers of Consumers' Co-operation, the true theory of their own activities.

Up to this time she had not come into sympathetic touch with the Socialist movement. The members of the Social-Democratic Federation whom she met in the East End, and of whom she gives vivid descriptions, were not likely to attract her, and the co-operators and older trade unionists who were her friends were contemptuous of the Socialists. But in 1889 she read the Fabian Essays, and was specially attracted by Webb's essay on "The Historical Basis." In the spring of 1890, while kept at home in Gloucestershire by her father's now helpless illness, she had a number of the London Socialists down for "week-ends." She had already perfected "the Method of the Interview," and I remember that Massingham, on returning from his week-end, said: "She knows such a lot about one. Where does she get it from?" and that he was told: "Didn't she ask you a good many questions, and didn't you answer pretty fully? Well, that is where she gets it from." She had already parted intellectually with the individualist leaders of the Charity Organization Society, and one of the most powerful sections of the book is the demonstration, supported by extracts from Charles Booth's inquiry, that the "principles of 1834," when fully applied in the Poor Law Unions of the Tower Hamlets, made no essential change in the social condition of the district. "The people," Charles Booth said, "are no less poor, nor much, if at all, more independent." Contact with the Fabians, who were applying her own methods, in some cases with less thoroughness, but always with greater confidence of success, quickened the change, and on February 1st, 1890, she writes: "At last I am a Socialist!" By 1891 she had begun regular literary co-operation with Webb, and in 1892 they were married and her "apprenticeship" comes to an end.

This bare outline gives little indication of the special quality of the book. The entries from the diary, with their record of struggles against personal unhappiness and ill-health, are profoundly moving, and make this one of the most interesting as well as the most informing of autobiographies. Writing for her own eye, late at night or early in the morning, she often attains a literary force and passion which appears less often in the series of joint historical and sociological works by which the Webbs have made their fame; and the careful examination of her intellectual position, written month by month with no presentiment of the direction of coming change, creates a sense of the inevitability of the change when it comes. Her working hours, often begun at five or six a.m., are often cut short by illness and fatigue. She complains of certain intellectual limitations, illustrated in early life by her complete inability to acquire algebra. But she herself is amazed by her own determination; she writes (in October, 1884): "When I think of the minuteness of my faculties, which, so far as persistent work goes, are below the average, and of the really Herculean nature of my persistency, my own nature puzzles me."

Successive elections are now indicating the rapidly increasing decay of the once powerful British Liberal Party, and I would urge on any young Liberal who wishes either to understand the cause of that decay, or to learn the hard means by which alone there is any chance of recovery, to read and reread this book. The Liberals of the eighteen-eighties were living on the intellectual capital created by the life-long toil of Locke and Adam Smith and Bentham. Their leaders, Gladstone and Lord Granville, and even John Morley, had come to assume that no more creative intellectual work was needed. Gladstone, in a letter of 1885 to Lord Acton, denounced "what they call construction." If Liberalism is not now to become an antiquated remnant, expressing the interests and prejudices of a few nonconformist retail tradesmen and master-men, who instinctively dislike both conservatism and trade unionism, if it is to represent a real contribution by the British "intelligentia" to the life of their time, it must take up again the work of "construction." But "construction" requires not only dinner-parties and campaign speeches and exciting

conferences, but personal intellectual work, so severe as to be inconsistent with the easy-going life of traditional British politics. The Webbs have done that work, and are still, in spite of years and fatigue, doing it. Let those who believe that Liberalism may offer better guidance to Britain and Europe than that offered by the Labour Party, read in this book the process by which Mrs. Webb reached a new analysis of the problems of Sweating and Co-operation and Trade Unionism, and imagine, if they can, the process by which she and her husband produced the Minority Report on the Poor Law. Or, if they prefer it, let them learn what was the way of daily life followed by their own heroes, Locke, or Bentham, or John Stuart Mill. Until the Liberal Party is based again on "the intolerable disease" of life-long thought, it must continue to decay.

GRAHAM WALLAS.

### THE PLACE OF VOLTAIRE

*Voltaire.* By RICHARD ALDINGTON. The Republic of Letters. Edited by WILLIAM ROSE, M.A., Ph.D. (Routledge. 6s.)

The difficulties of writing a biography of Voltaire are insurmountable. To record his life and work is to write the history of a century. There is no important movement in which he did not play a part and scarcely a literary or political figure with whom he did not correspond and quarrel. The sheer bulk of the ninety volumes of his published work is overwhelming. Its scope is universal. He wrote tragedies, comedies, farces, odes, squibs, histories, novels, sermons, philosophic and scientific treatises, economic and social tracts, as well as tens of thousands of letters intended for publication and some that were not. It would be comparatively easy to deal with this profusion of material if it was in any way consistent. But his work, like his character, defies generalization. It is impossible to attribute a good or bad quality to him without finding many occasions on which he displayed its opposite, and to assert that he held any specific view is to open oneself to the answer that he frequently contradicted it. In political philosophy, for instance, he alternately turned Locke into epigrams and flattered Frederick the Great or Louis XV. by extolling benevolent despotism. He seems to have believed in toleration, but, though he did much to further it by his work for the Calas, his theoretical argument for it is incomplete and timid, and he was as ready to advocate the persecution of his opponents as the Roman Church itself.

It is extremely difficult to write about a wit without being dull. To describe and analyze wit is the dreariest of achievements, while quotation of the witticisms themselves either leaves the reader annoyed that, out of their century and context, they are no longer amusing, or, if they survive the ordeal of being "led up to" and retain their point, the reader merely regrets the contrast between the biographer and his hero. Mr. Aldington could not altogether avoid these difficulties. He is occasionally dull, sometimes tells us too much and sometimes too little, and reminds us too often that Voltaire was witty. But if the new series in which he is writing demands both a biography and a critical examination in so small a compass, it is difficult to see how he could have written a much better book.

Mr. Aldington's greatest merit is that he is not tolerant of eighteenth-century France, but attempts to understand it. This is a great achievement for an English writer. Lord Morley, for instance, never forgets to point out that ages differ, that morals are relative, and that a man's work may be good even if his private life was not. But Voltaire needs no apology. Mr. Aldington presents him as a living force in his own century and does not explain that his faults should be dealt with lightly because of the regrettable fact that he did not live in our own more moral age.

The interest displayed by young writers to-day in the eighteenth century is not a mere pose, nor is it solely due to a natural inclination to annoy one's parents by contrasting them unfavourably with their own grandparents. Mr. Aldington has a genuine sympathy with the age to which Voltaire gave his name. He craves, in company with many of his contemporaries, for some standard of taste and form.

Now every age is prudish about something, and, until the advent of Rousseau, the eighteenth century retained the reverence for "bon goût" which the Hôtel Rambouillet had imposed on literary society. Even so advanced a woman as Mlle. Lespinasse felt that a god had been dethroned when Buffon, whom she had long been anxious to meet, used a term not in the vocabulary of Racine. It was inevitable that the universal interests and the romantic yearnings of the eighteenth century should eventually break down the restraints of classical form, but until that happened, the *philosophes*, who were in fact journalists, wrote journalism which was also classical French literature. Voltaire was, indeed, the supreme example of a writer whose eyes were always fixed upon the immediate effect of his words, who was conspicuously, even in his tragedies, a blatant propagandist, and who yet not only conformed to the canons of a great literary tradition, but was also responsible for bringing its form to even greater perfection. Of Voltaire's letters Mr. Aldington remarks that, though he does not assert that their prose "is an ultimate perfection which cannot be surpassed," it possessed "qualities by no means incompatible with modernity of thought and outlook, possibly more suitable to it than the vexatious barbarisms of America and the yet more deplorable jargon of our own newspapers."

In dealing with Voltaire's philosophy and influence Mr. Aldington is wise, but necessarily a little superficial. He sees that the most consistent thing in Voltaire was a belief, akin to Lord Chesterfield's, in an unenthusiastic common sense. Voltaire was, indeed, one of the few genuine sceptics among the *philosophes*. For he was sceptical not only about religious beliefs, but also about human nature. He had no confidence in the new dogmas of progress or democracy. His view of mankind was akin to that of Rochefoucauld. He suffered neither from the delusion of Helvétius that men were purely rational beings, born without passion and infinitely malleable by environment, nor from that of Rousseau, who, when at a safe distance from his friends, believed all men instinctively good and corrupted only by an artificial society. Voltaire, therefore, joined, and indeed led, the philosophic assault upon the *ancien régime*, but he took no part in the construction of liberal doctrine, which was, in fact, the real work of the *philosophes*. For the real importance of the whole Encyclopedist movement is not that it influenced in some degree the course of the French Revolution (which was the natural outcome of bankruptcy and outworn institutions), but that in assailing superstition and autocracy it evolved the dogmas of nineteenth-century liberalism. From the Encyclopedists the nineteenth century inherited its arguments for the unrestricted rights of private property, for free speech, for free trade, and for the parliamentary franchise. "The greatest happiness of the greatest number" first appears in Helvétius: the clearest teaching of the Encyclopædia is the majesty of science, and it was in Turgot and Condorcet that the conception of progress first received a modern form. These were the ideas with which nineteenth-century liberalism was satisfied, though the needs of the new era were in fact different ones. But there is a lag in human affairs. Social theory is ever at least a generation behind social fact. What the nineteenth century needed was not only a call to the political liberty which the *ancien régime* had denied to men, but also the realization that, without organization and purpose, science would bring disaster rather than happiness, and the rights of man prove empty phrases before the dual tyranny of wealth and numbers.

Voltaire's scepticism about man's use of his knowledge has, therefore, found singular justification. He tempts us to the view that to retire to a pleasant and secluded spot and there cultivate our garden with Candide is the only rational procedure. But once again he turns upon us and laughs at his own final and most magnificent inconsistency. Philosophy is left aside when cruelty raises its head, and like Anatole France, his direct, if kindlier, successor, Voltaire is at least sure that it is worth fighting for justice and toleration. Logic led him to cultivate his garden, but the heart which so many declared he did not possess, led him in this alone to imitate St. Francis and include the whole suffering world in the garden whose cultivation was his business.

KINGSLEY MARTIN.



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**Red Soil.** By L. E. GIELGUD. (Heinemann. 7s. 6d.)

**The Oldest God.** By STEPHEN MCKENNA. (Thornton Butterworth. 7s. 6d.)

**Glorious Apollo.** By E. BARRINGTON. (Harrap. 7s. 6d.)

**Cancelled Love.** By C. N. WILLIAMSON. (Methuen. 7s. 6d.)

AN unobtrusive but independent spirited maiden lady, brought up in her childhood and youth in the country, and allowed comparative liberty there, is upon her father's death confined to the rather stuffy household of a relative in London. After nearly twenty years of this she rebels, isolates herself in a little village in Bucks, and, annoyed there by a favourite nephew who insists on following her, invokes the aid of the devil to get rid of him, and becomes a witch. This is the substance of Miss Warner's conscientiously conceived and extremely well-written story, and it is so unusual that one cannot express an opinion on the book without taking it into account. With what the author does it is impossible to find fault. She is capable, objective, and collected; she can present a situation or describe a countryside without striking a false note. Yet as a whole the book is unsatisfying, and excellent as the treatment is, one feels a fundamental falsity somewhere in it. And one feels this more and more as the story draws to a close. It is not so much that Miss Warner does not rise to the occasion when she describes Lolly Willowes's transformation into a witch, as that by deliberate design she does not choose to do so. She writes about occult things, but she gives them no significance other than she gives to ordinary things. When Laura is a witch she is not essentially different from what she was before the change happened. The marvels, imaginary or real, of witchcraft are not suggested. Our imagination is not released into a different world, complete in itself, as it is when we read Hoffmann's strange tales, or some of Mr. de la Mare's. Laura's initiation gives us accordingly the effect of a conjuring trick which, except for one or two incidental results, leaves things pretty much as they were before. Miss Warner's conception of the devil is even more disappointing. To her, we feel, he is the devil in much the same sense as Mr. Smith is Mr. Smith. In other words, he is a person with a name. But the difference between the devil and Mr. Smith is obvious. We believe in the one as a person; while the other may be several things to us, but never a person. This falsifies Miss Warner's Satan for us as soon as he appears. If he is given a philosophical significance he can still be accepted at a pinch; but in presenting him as she does the author merely imposes upon us the necessity to enter into a game of make-believe, in a novel which otherwise never asks for it. This sudden change from one level of reality to another robs the story of its significance. Without the witchcraft, which is indeed not strictly necessary, it would have been a remarkable novel. The description of the inhabitants of Great Mop, the evocation of the heavy, sodden, and yet fascinating atmosphere of a Bucks village, the sense of queerness in the landscape and in the life of the people—this is beautifully conveyed. But everything is spoiled when all this becomes explicit as the results of witchcraft. The mystery is made banal.

Mr. Hughes, too, is interested in fairies and the devil, but he makes his more elemental, on the whole, than Miss Warner's are. His fancy, however, is too easygoing, too almost journalistic, in the more fantastic stories in "A Moment of Time," to create any poignant effect. His ideas are sometimes exquisite, but they are never worked out. In the title story he touches a vast theme, whether the world exists or not; in "She caught hold of the Toe," a fantastic improvisation on what would happen if Time were reversed, he has a subject which could be endlessly developed. But though he has a good metaphysical imagination, he is content to throw his themes away before he has well begun upon them. It is in the slighter stories, accordingly, that he is most satisfying. "The Sea" is an example. The plot

is trifling: a drunken man imagines that he is a mermaid swimming in the sea. But the ingenuity and contorted humour with which Mr. Hughes translates the properties of a street into marine terms is full of delightful surprises. "Lochinvarovic," a tale of a grotesque abduction in the Serbian Highlands, is excellent, too, if, like everything else in the volume, a little careless in execution. Many of the sketches Mr. Hughes would have been wise not to reprint. "The Vanishing Man" is a commonplace shocker of the worst kind. After giving us some very fine dialogue, "Poor Man's Inn" ends with unbelievable crudity. "Martha," one of the longer stories, is uninteresting and unconvincing, and yet with a little concentration might have been neither. Humour, invention, fancy, intelligence—Mr. Hughes has all these; but he is terribly casual, and too content with the second-best. One always feels that he could do better, that a little more, indeed, would make him an excellent writer.

"Chains" is a very ambitious book. It attempts to give in a series of pictures a sort of précis of the history of the human race up to the European War. The hero, a young poet, meets all his former incarnations in a kind of trance. He is a cave man fleeing from the menace of the Glacial Age; he is a galley slave; an associate of the early Christians; a listener to the speculations of the Renaissance; he plays all the rôles which a man can play in a civilized or uncivilized state. He suffers with all humanity, and his sufferings are recorded with a royal expenditure of ejaculation marks. To M. Barbusse history is a melodrama. His main figure is either a hero or an unmitigated villain, except when he is both together. Senseless cruelty or senseless heroism or senseless love is all the author sees in the history of mankind. Sometimes his violence is amusing. The strongest term of abuse the populace two thousand years ago could find for the persecuted Christians was "Communists." Burning in the fires of love the hero exclaims: "I am shaken by the pulsing, almost bleeding motor of joy." Everything is exaggerated so wildly and underlined so obviously that all feeling of reality soon vanishes. A petulant introductory note cannot conceal the fact that M. Barbusse is uneasy about his book.

In "Glorious Apollo" Mrs. Barrington, also, essays a great subject, the life of Byron; but her failure with it has not the interest, the vast orchestration, of M. Barbusse's failure with Man. The "almost bleeding motor of joy" is a flight beyond her; and the kind of observation which gives her failure an English complexion rather than a French is altogether different: "When we understand better the problems of life and death, we shall know that when the Greeks spoke of the inexorable dooming of the Three Sisters, they meant in one word—Heredity." M. Barbusse is quite incapable of this particular kind of badness, just as Mrs. Barrington is incapable of his kind. It would be difficult to judge between them. Mr. McKenna's failings are of a less obvious kind. "The Oldest God" is competently written, occasionally amusing, not without intelligence: the fact remains that it gives one all through a hushed feeling of solemn nonsense. The issue between Pan and Christ—who can take that seriously now? It is not a problem, yet it is the kind of problem that Mr. McKenna is always working out. Mrs. Williamson's latest novel, "Cancelled Love," is a very simple affair indeed. The author seems to write best in collaboration.

"Red Soil" is an imaginative reconstruction of some of the horrors of the Russian Revolution. There are adventures, cruelties, bestialities, in abundance; but we do feel that the author is trying to give us a fair notion of the conditions of civil war. He is on the side of the Whites, but he gives one the impression of being as nearly impartial in his portrayal of the chief characters on both sides as it is humanly possible to be. He has a remarkable gift for the delineation of character; all his men are vividly drawn; and of his women, if Olga is less vivid than the men, the infamous Gretchen is graphically drawn. So is Brodesco, the gipsy Commissary and Gretchen's lover; he is a type of those almost impossible figures which the destruction of all the safeguards of civilized society sometimes throws up. The story is quietly told, but it is full of fine observation and genuine power. Mr. Gielgud neither exploits nor glosses over the horrors of his theme.

EDWIN MUIR.

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## TURKISH SCENES

**A Turkish Kaleidoscope.** By CLARE SHERIDAN. (Duckworth. 15s.)

THIS is not quite so gay a book as "Across Europe with Satanella"; but Mrs. Sheridan is never anything but lively. She is a born journalist, with an eye for colour, a keen scent for "romance," a vein of sentimentality, and the faculty of sometimes appearing a little more profound than she actually is. In the present volume she gives us a series of vivid vignettes of life in and around Constantinople. She portrays with satire a typical Turk, outwardly professing scorn for the British Embassy, yet secretly flattered by his invitation to an official garden party. She draws some lurid pictures of Turkish cruelty; of Turkish disrespect for the dead as for the living; of Turkish methods, under a so-called New Republic, of settling a strike on the part of the mechanics of the Bosphorus steamboat service. Of the Bosphorus itself, as seen, with its multifarious shipping, from the balcony of the author's temporary home, we are given some pleasing glimpses; but for the Black Sea ports the writer has no good word to say. Here she found the abomination of desolation. At Zongouldak the coalminers were living under almost indescribable conditions. At Trebizon, where the only good roads were those dating back to the Russian occupation of 1916, she saw the locomotives which were delivered new from the United States shortly before the Russian evacuation, standing "in a long, rusty row on the sea's edge." Everywhere there was evidence of Turkey's inability "to construct, to reconstruct, or to preserve."

This is a book for entertainment rather than instruction. But Mrs. Sheridan's reading of the political situation in Constantinople is at least interesting. "Not only officially and diplomatically, but in daily intercourse with the people," she tells us, "the Russians are the least disliked of the foreign population." Next in favour come the Germans, whose industrial activities in Turkey are likened to the labour of ants. The French are represented as scoring to some extent by "the admirable clairvoyance" of their diplomacy; while the British are the most unpopular of all. Summing up her conclusions, the author says:—

"To a Western observer it seems almost impossible that so primitive a State can exist in the hard, competitive world of to-day. But the Turkish nation will doubtless continue to exist, for the simple reason that her people have none of the requirements that force others into the competitive market. Turkey needs no money. The people can subsist—and prefer to—as they did centuries ago, and as they can for centuries to come, depositing their camel-loads upon the beach! The little sums that are repaid by these humble exports more than satisfy them. Even the Turkish individual of education demands no luxuries."

When Mrs. Sheridan suggested that British capital might build "the harbours and the quays, the railways and the roads that are so blatantly needed," the answer was: "British capital is always accompanied by British bayonets—and we prefer to live without them."

## CHINESE BASKETS

**Chinese Baskets.** By BERTHOLD LAUFER. Design Series, No. 3. 33 Plates. (Field Museum of Anthropology.)

FOLK-ART is like a silver coin that has fallen out of the king's money-bag and rolled into a drain. A hundred, a thousand years afterwards a bomb or a flood may bring it back to light; and now it is valuable not as so many ounces of pure silver, but conceivably as the sole surviving proof that such a king, such a court and country ever existed.

So with art. It sinks from hall to hamlet, to be rediscovered centuries later by intelligent excursionists from some mechanized city. Like the silver coin, it has still a certain intrinsic value; but its chief importance is as a relic of something that has otherwise completely disappeared.

These baskets, not one of which is likely to be much older than the middle of the eighteenth century, contain echoes of the remotest periods in Chinese art. The oval basket (Plate V.), "Made with a pure heart by Madame Ku of Li-men in 1888," is in feeling and even in decoration (witness the narrow bands of key-pattern), a ritual bronze of the first millennium B.C. There are abundant echoes of the T'ang dynasty; for example, the flat basketry tray of Plate I., which recalls certain green and brown dishes. The

Westernized decorative T'ang style, so well represented in the Shoso-in Treasury at Nara, is recalled by a series of wooden "travelling-boxes" made in basket shape. These are perhaps older than the objects in actual basket-ware. But the book is not merely interesting as a depository of recollections. There is, particularly in the rectangular flower-baskets (Plates II.-IV.), an impressiveness and gravity such as one does not associate with products of the late nineteenth century. These shapes are of great antiquity; we know that they have been imitated in pottery since the thirteenth century. Other objects, such as the little boxes "for making presents of food in" are an agreeable commentary on the amenities of Chinese rural life.

Dr. Laufer, to whom the book is due, contributes a short preface.

## FACTORY LEGISLATION

**Factory Legislation and its Administration, 1891-1924.** By H. A. MESS. (King. 12s. 6d.)

It is difficult for a historian, or even for a social scientist (horrible phrase), to turn with enthusiasm to the story of Factory Legislation since 1871, for by that date the great victories of principle had been won, and what remained was chiefly a matter of detail and administration. The most striking new departures in industrial legislation, involving direct protection of the adult male worker, took place with reference to the railways and the coal mines, or are to be seen in the Shops Acts and Trade Boards Acts. These Mr. Mess, rather unfortunately, rules outside his subject, and they receive only passing mention. To lay it down as a principle that "except in certain dangerous trades, men may still work an unlimited number of hours" is misleading, even though there is a reference in a footnote elsewhere to the eight hours Act of 1908. But controversy has not ceased, in spite of substantial agreement on principles, as is shown by the agitation now in progress for the passing into law of the Factories Bill, and a comprehensive study of the progress of recent years was therefore needed.

Mr. Mess has done his work with conscientious thoroughness, and his skilful division of the subject brings order into chaos. He points out that because the Factory Acts were grafted on to a system that persisted in regarding itself as *laissez faire* in principle, legislation often lags behind the standard established by custom and voluntary agreement. This introduces a dangerous element of insecurity, and may tend to lower the prestige of Government and diminish public confidence in the political machine. He is also struck by the inadequacy, even now, of the provisions for the prevention of accidents, in spite of the progress that has undoubtedly been made in the regulation of employments that involve special risks to health. He concludes his book with some practical suggestions for removing these defects.

The one genuinely new development that falls within his period is the appearance of international action. To this he devotes a chapter, tracing its growth from the Berlin Conference of 1890. It is rather a disappointing story. We have been trying to apply to nations the principle enunciated by Mill in reference to individuals, namely, that freedom of action may be hampered by fear of competition, in which case the only remedy is a uniform standard enforced by law. But the advocates of this principle demand absolute uniformity before they consent to bind themselves, and that is sometimes unobtainable between nations. Mr. Baldwin tells us that we failed to ratify the Forty-Eight Hour Week Convention because we were not sure that, when we all said the same thing, we all meant the same thing. There is force in Mr. Mess's retort that "it is equivalence rather than uniformity that alone is possible or desirable." The success of international action must depend very largely on which of these views prevails.

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Two new travel books are "Way Back in Papua," by J. H. Holmes (Allen & Unwin, 10s. 6d.), and "A Tropical Tramp with the Tourists," by Harry L. Foster (Bodley Head, 12s. 6d.).

An interesting book on industry and psychology is "Industrial Psychology in Great Britain," by Charles S. Myers (Cape, 7s. 6d.). Another psychological book worthy of note is "Common Sense and its Cultivation," by Dr. Hanbury Hankin (Kegan Paul, 7s. 6d.). "Emotion and Insanity," by S. Thalbitzer (Kegan Paul, 7s. 6d.), is a new volume in the International Library of Psychology, Philosophy, and Scientific Method.

Messrs. Batsford publish two volumes in the "People's Life and Work" Series: "Life and Work of the People of England," by Dorothy Hartley and Margaret M. Eliot (4s. 6d. each), dealing with the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries respectively.

Messrs. Macmillan publish the third and last volume of "Palgrave's Dictionary of Political Economy, N-Z," edited by Henry Higgs (36s.).

## BOOKS IN BRIEF

**Paradise in Piccadilly.** By HARRY FURNISS, (The Bodley Head. 12s. 6d.)

Paradise in Piccadilly—Mr. Furniss drops the "The." The name of that secluded mansion in the corner of your card is said to do more for you than virtue, rank, or riches, or proves that you are the possessor of them all. It was in 1804 that Mr. Copland bought from the Duke of York and Albany the house that had originally belonged to Stephen Fox and had been sold by him to Lord Melbourne in 1770. Mr. Copland, anticipating the demand for flats, had the brilliant idea of converting the mansion into sets of apartments for gentlemen. As the law of Albany is that no material change can be made without the consent of all the lodgers, and as, until recent years, all the lodgers were men, the building has remained in spirit and in substance precisely as it was in the year 1804. The place has escaped the historian, as indeed it is apt to escape the sightseer. The truth is that once you have commented upon the beauty of the position and referred to the fact that Byron lived there a short, and Lord Macaulay a long, time, there is little to be said. One may add that the oil lamps have been replaced by gas, and that it was due to a hoax by Lord Macaulay's niece, who warned him that a robbery was planned, that the present iron gates were hastily provided. Mr. Furniss has done his best to fill the book with stories of the occupants, and when these ran thin, has filled up pages with copious quotations from references to Albany in fiction. But this is as it should be. The inhabitants, we have no doubt, much prefer to be left alone.

\* \* \*

**The Augustan Books of Modern Poetry.** Frederick William Harvey; Sir Edmund Gosse; A Religious Anthology; Walt Whitman; Andrew Lang; Siegfried Sassoon. (Benn, 6d. each.)

This new batch of Augustan Books is, it will be seen, sufficiently catholic. The name of Mr. F. W. Harvey will probably not even be known to some people, but his verse is worth inclusion. The "Religious Anthology" begins with Cleanthes and ends with a Psalm, but draws on the way from some unexpected sources. Andrew Lang and Sir Edmund Gosse are not wearing as well, in our opinion, as either Walt Whitman or Mr. Sassoon.

\* \* \*

**Karl Marx's "Capital."** By A. D. LINDSAY. (Oxford University Press, 2s. 6d.)

This is a very useful little book by the Master of Balliol in the "World's Manuals" series. It is an introductory essay to the study of Marx. Mr. Lindsay criticizes both the doctrinaire Socialist's uncritical praise and his opponent's uncritical blame of Marx's book. His own analysis and valuation of Marx are clear and sensible.

Burke's Peerage, Baronetage and Knightage, 1926. Debrett's House of Commons and the Judicial Bench 1926. (Dean. 20s. each)

These two annuals are, as usual, admirably compiled and edited. Burke, now in its eighty-fourth edition, is a most imposing volume of nearly 3,000 pages. The "Guide to Relative Precedence" which it contains is a fascinating study. Debrett's "House of Commons" is thoroughly up to date—in fact, up to January 25th of this year.

## REVIEWS AND MAGAZINES

"THE ROUND TABLE" conducts an examination into "Fascist Reforms in Italy," discussing in some detail "Super-Fascist Legislation" for economic, political, and defensive objects. The principal defensive laws concern the deprivation of exiles of their Italian nationality, and the "Fascistization" of the Press, completed last December. Doubts about the wisdom of this latter course were expressed by several Fascist writers, but they were silenced by an article from the fountain-head, pointing out that "there is no longer any room for many things which were excellent in other times," and concluding with these words: "To-day among the things for which there is no room must be included the Opposition." In "The Control of Public Expenditure," in the same paper, the writer asks why an effort should not "be made to build up a strong non-party economy group, on which Governments of any complexion could rely for support in administrative thrift, giving it real work to do, the necessary trained help in doing it, and liberal recognition of work well done? But for the lightening of the taxpayers' load, one final condition remains. Readers of Kingsley's 'Water-Babies' will remember the Mayor of Plymouth who, groping for lobsters in the rocks, had his finger caught by one, who held on as the tide rose. When the situation was desperate, the Mayor decided that he must cut off his finger, 'but for that he needed two things, courage and a knife, and he had neither' . . . late as it is, a knife (not an axe) might still be forged. Only, where is the courage to use it?" In the "Contemporary Review," Captain Wedgwood Benn considers the financial policy of the Government in an article called "Penny Wise and Pound Foolish"; Mr. Lancelot Lawton, in the "Fortnightly Review" writes on "Factories and Farms," and Mr. W. F. Watson, in the same paper, answers in the negative the question, "Is the British Labour Movement Democratic?" Mr. David Brownlie deals with "The Coal Question" in the "Fortnightly Review," and "A Northumbrian Miner" writes on the same subject in "The English Review."

Turning to Imperial and Colonial affairs we have in the "Contemporary Review," "Lord Irwin's Task in India," by Lord Meston, and a forcible article in "The World To-day" called "Eye-wash in Nigeria" by Captain Fitzpatrick, late of the Nigerian Service, the burden of which is: "Unless we are going to improve Nigeria we ought to get out of Nigeria. At the time we took over the country we admitted that we went there merely to help it and its peoples on. We don't do that by sticking them into the tenth century, and keeping them there, nice though they may look in that condition to the eyes of the sophisticated tourist from Europe." But we should like to know whether Captain Fitzpatrick proposes to "take the native out of the tenth century" by selling his land.

Articles on Foreign Affairs are scanty. Mr. Cecil Melville, in the "Fortnightly Review," writes on "Red Imperialism," which cryptic title apparently refers to Bolshevik propaganda in the Balkan Peninsula. Mr. William Miller writes on "The Greek Dictatorship" in the "Contemporary Review," and in that paper Mr. George Glasgow's notes on Foreign Affairs in general are as enlightened and entertaining as usual. The "Nineteenth Century" has "The Japanese Fighting Forces and Disarmament," by Captain M. D. Kennedy. The writer points out that even with her contemplated increase in air strength Japan will not be in a position to carry out an aerial invasion of any distant territory, and is of the opinion that Japan became skilful at the European "game of grab" just when it had become *vieux jeu* with the other Powers, and realizing this, is bent now merely on putting herself in

## BOVRIL, LTD.

Presiding at the twenty-ninth annual general meeting of Bovril, Limited, on Thursday, February 25th, Sir George Lawson Johnston (chairman) congratulated the shareholders on having had another successful year.

With their permission, he would take the report as read, and then proceed to deal with some of the more important changes in the accounts that had occurred during the last year.

Turning to the debtor side of the balance sheet, they would find the alterations in the capital consequent on the share issue made during 1925. Of the 6 per cent. preference, there are now one million one pound shares, as against 750,000; the 7½ per cent. ordinary shares still stand at one million, but there are now one million deferred shares of £1 each, in place of 750,000 in the previous balance sheet.

It would probably surprise the shareholders to learn that the actual advertising expenditure, for the year 1925, was lower than that of 1924, and that in spite of the fact that the ordinary direct newspaper, etc., advertising was slightly more. This might sound strange, but the fact was that the exceptional charge of £30,000 for prize money did not recur in 1925. It would be remembered that that sum was given as prize money for the benefit of the hospitals, to be competed for in the Bovril Poster Competition, with the result that 764,000 people went in for the competition, which produced a net profit for the hospitals of £75,297.

The impression favourable to Bovril left on the public mind had far outlived the period of the competition, just as their action in maintaining prices unchanged throughout the war had firmly established their reputation as anti-profiteers. In the latter connection especially they had many letters from shareholders saying that they had been too altruistic to be in business, but, as a matter of fact, the business had moved forward on a wave of public approbation ever since.

The "dividends, interest, etc., from associated companies" figure stood at £59,384, an increase of £18,051, in the year under review.

He was not quite sure what was the popular definition of the word "capitalist," but he believed it was sometimes used as a term of reproach against one who had acquired, say, twice as much as oneself, even if this capital had been earned by special intelligence, or thrift, or as the result of the unselfish thrift of one's parents. It was, of course, the owner of wealth who had never done useful work of any kind and was only of value to some luxury trades who caused discontent. He, however, believed that the great majority of people thoroughly realised that, with human nature as it was, special effort would not be obtained without offering a due reward for it.

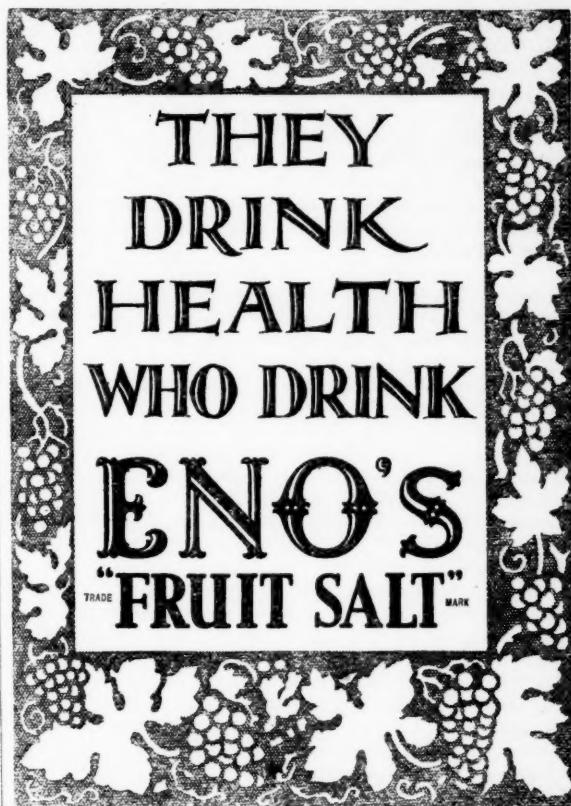
In the prosperous United States they had many more men of wealth working hard in business than we had here. Over here we wanted the old merchant adventurer spirit again, and with 1926 advertising and sales management added. Also, he would suggest that there should be no one in control of a big industry who was only interested in a fixed salary, and to whom good or bad results were not of vital importance. The gain-all or lose-all feeling made for real effort, and something out of the ordinary by way of results. This could only be fully felt by those who had capital in businesses they work in—it need not be a large sum, but it must be a substantial portion of one's whole capital.

You may be supremely intelligent even before you are an adult, but judgment only comes with experience after many years of hard training. It was usually not till the forties, often not till after fifty, that men were able to enjoy the full fascination of deciding rapidly in big things when immediate decisions were vital. It was only comparatively few who developed these faculties to the full, but the few were national business assets, and should be encouraged to work as late in life as they efficiently could.

We only seemed to hear of big salaries when some business that was not doing well bought, in the hope of retrieving its fortunes, a super-organiser away from a successful concern; but sometimes the power of judgment attained after many years in one business would not avail to the full in another.

Shareholders and workers had a right to demand that their concern be efficiently managed, but they should reward efficient management with remuneration that was worth while. A small percentage of the profits, or an infinitesimal portion of the turnover, must seem a big sum to pay an individual or a group of individuals, but he or they were well worth it if by their ability and energy they could make the wheels go round successfully.

At the conclusion of the meeting the chairman made presentations to some twenty members of the staff who had been with the company since its formation in 1896.



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a position to ensure the obtaining of necessary supplies, since she cannot obtain the territory for supplying them.

The winter number of "Commerce," edited by MM. Paul Valéry, Léon-Paul Fargue, and Valérie Larbaud, is now available. At first sight rather formidable, this thick grey journal contains some stimulating and witty writing. Among the best is "Le Vain Travail de Voir Divers Pays," by M. Larbaud and "Banalité," by M. Fargue. Charles Mauron's prose "Poèmes" are also remarkable; readers of THE NATION will remember one or two, translated by Mr. Fry, appearing in our columns. There are also contributions by André Suarès, Edmond Teste, Hugo von Hofmannsthal, and Boris Pasternak.

"Coterie" is born again this spring as "The New Coterie," with a list of twenty-two contributors and eighty-seven pages. The appearance of each is necessarily brief, and, perhaps equally necessarily, startling, as the impression is of a line of doors snapped open, one after the other, and as quickly shut again. Mr. Robert Nichols writes an essay "Concerning Hamlet"; there are short sketches by Mr. Liam O'Flaherty and Mr. T. F. Powys, and a poem by Miss Nancy Cunard. Mr. O'Flaherty also is responsible for the best item in the "Adelphi," a short story called "The Inquisition." There is another instalment of Mr. Aylmer Maude's translation of Tolstoy's "The Devil," and Mr. Murry continues his scolding, in the manner of a revivalist preacher, of Mr. T. S. Eliot.

"The English Review" publishes an excellent tale called "The Horse Thief," by Hannah Berman, and the same paper has a lament for the passing of the old Regent Street by Derwent Miall. ". . . To come back to Regent Street to-day," he writes, "is like meeting an old friend who used to live comfortably, urbanely, with a certain lavishness not unbecoming to one of his substantial means, and to find him grown pompous, grandiose in his views, a little given to austerity—in a word—unclubable."

"Chambers's Journal" contains an article on "North Pole Possibilities" by Mr. Paul Tynor; on the Khyber Railway by Lieut-General Sir George MacMunn; a story of the East Coast of Africa by Mr. Withers Gill, and an account of a journey in a Spanish train by Mr. Alfred Brown.

In the "Cornhill Magazine" a splendid fire and slaughter serial by Captain P. C. Wren, called "Who Rideth Alone," is unwinding, and there are as well stories by Mr. Stanley Weyman, Mr. Lawrence Kirk, and Mr. Denny Stokes.

## NEW GRAMOPHONE RECORDS

### SONGS, OPERATIC, AND CHOIRS

#### SONG.

FEEDERICK DELIUS: "To Daffodils." H. & G. BANTOCK: Serenade from "Six Jester Songs." Sung by Muriel Brunskill, with piano. (Columbia. 10 in. record. 3876. 3s.)

The Delius song is a pleasant song, without anything very much to it, but Muriel Brunskill makes the most of it and of her own pleasant voice. The other song is one which would grace any drawing-room, though there it would not often be sung as well as upon this record. The record plays smoothly and clearly.

#### OPERATIC.

WAGNER: "Lohengrin." Finale of Act I. and King's Prayer (in English). Miriam Licette, Muriel Brunskill, Frank Mullings, Kingsley Lark, Thorpe Bates, and Grand Opera Chorus, with Orchestra conducted by Sir Hamilton Harty. (Columbia. 12 in. record. L.1714. 6s. 6d.)

PUCCINI: "Vissi d'arte" from "Tosca" (in Italian), and "They call me Mimi" from "Bohème" (in German). Sung by Claire Dux, soprano. (Polydor. 12 in. record. 72888. 6s. 9d.)

DONIZETTI: "Vien Leonora" and "A tanto Amor" from "La Favorita" (in Italian). Sung by Ricardo Stracciari, baritone, with orchestra. (Columbia. 10 in. record. X.354. 6s.)

LEONCAVALLO: "On with the Motley" and "No, Pagliacci, no more," from "Pagliacci" (in English). Sung by William Heseltine, with orchestra. (Columbia. 10 in. record. 3873. 3s.)

As far as the music goes, the Wagner record stands by

itself. It is a satisfactory record in every way, particularly the Finale of Act I., in which the balance between orchestra, chorus, and individual singers is unusually good. There is very little of the confusion which is too often the case with Wagnerian orchestral records where the orchestra is playing and the singers and chorus singing their loudest. The "King's Prayer" is also good, but here the difficulties of recording are, on the whole, less.

The two Puccini songs on the Polydor record are old favourites with gramophonists, and the record will stand comparison with most (though not with Destinn's singing of "Vissi d'arte"). Claire Dux has a powerful soprano voice, which tends to record rather hard and vibrant; we found it greatly improved by playing on a low tone needle. She is better in the "Tosca" song than in the "Bohème."

The Donizetti songs are also old favourites. They can rarely have been better sung than by Stracciari, who is advertised, not without reason, as among the "world's greatest baritones." He has a very fine voice, which records admirably.

The Leoncavallo songs from "Pagliacci" are not so successful. Perhaps, rather unfairly, one compares them with Caruso's rendering. William Heseltine's voice has not recorded very well here; it sounds very powerful, but is occasionally harsh and jarring.

#### CHOIRS.

The SHEFFIELD CHOIR, conducted by Dr. Henry Coward (unaccompanied). One side: (A) R. Edwards: "In Going to my Lonely Bed"; (B) W. Macfarren: "You Stole my Love." Other side: "The Bells of St. Michael," arranged by Sir R. P. Stewart. (Columbia. 12 in. record. 9075. 4s. 6d.)

BASILICA CHOIR. "Gloria" from Bruckner's Mass in D minor. (Polydor. 12 in. record. 66116. 5s. 9d.)

It is rather a curious fact that choirs so often make exceptionally good records. The Bruckner Mass on the Polydor is a case in point. It is an exceptionally good record. Though it is not an unaccompanied choir, the volume of sound is not as great as in some of the other choir records, and this may partly account for the fact that there is also less confusion. The music is pleasant, if one may use the word of a "Gloria." The Sheffield Choir is less serious, but the record is an excellent one. "The Bells" are most realistic.

#### INSTRUMENTAL.

##### PIANO.

DEBUSSY: "Les Collines D'Ancapri" (First Book of Preludes) and "Brûlères" (Second Book of Preludes). Pianoforte solos by William Murdoch. (Columbia. 10 in. record. D.1535. 4s. 6d.)

BAZZINI: "La Ronde des Lutins." H. VIEUXTEMPS: Polonaise, Op. 38. Violin solos by Mayer Gordon, with piano. (Columbia. 12 in. record. 9077. 4s. 6d.)

##### CELLO.

GRANADOS: "Danse Espagnole." KREISLER: "Liebesfreud." Solo by Antoni Sala, with piano. (Columbia. 10 in. record. 3875. 3s.)

##### OCTET.

J. H. SQUIRE CELESTE OCTET. Gavotte from A. Thomas's "Mignon" and Gabriel Marie's "La Cinquantaine." (Columbia. 10 in. record. 3877. 3s.)

The Debussy record is to be welcomed. The recording is excellent, and Mr. Murdoch's playing, of course, competent. They are both charming piano pieces, the "Brûlères" being perhaps the best and the most characteristic.

Both the violin pieces are brilliantly played. The Paganini concerto can be recommended to all who like instrumental callisthenics. It has some pleasant passages, but the gymnastics predominate. Prihoda's execution is remarkable, but this kind of piece does not lend itself to first-class recording. Mayer Gordon is also a very good executant, and this record plays remarkably well. Bazzini is a little dull, but the other piece is cheerful and pretty.

It is a pity that cello players so rarely give us anything but second-rate music. Sala plays excellently, but neither of the pieces on this record are particularly interesting. The Spanish Dance of Granados is quite pleasant, but nothing more. The Kreisler piece gives an opportunity to the player to show his skill, but is not really very suitable for the instrument.

The Celeste Octet give two light pieces of some charm, of which "La Cinquantaine" is the better.

# British American Illustrated Review

## *Contents—February.*

The British American Attitude  
London, New York, Paris

The Old Palace, Richmond. By Elizabeth Craig  
Art Notes Exhibits of Art

Hats Off to the "President Roosevelt"

Galahad at Monte Carlo. By C. Patrick Thompson

The Appeal of the British Model House. By Leslie Raymond

Modern Woman. By Malcolm Mackenzie

Money and Markets. By Herbert J. Spellen

Vanishing Bits of Old England. By Rosa M. Barrett

London Shows. By Leslie Tilley

Dog Shows. By Captain H. Hutchinson

Wireless Corner. By Barclay L. Humphrys

Book Reviews

Stamps of the Air. By Albert H. Harris

Auction Bridge: Bidding. By C. G. Bull

Crosswords in Verse. By N. E. S.

Notes and Notions

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## FINANCIAL SECTION

### THE WEEK IN THE CITY

#### TOBACCO AND CARRERAS—OIL AND RUBBER.

THE avenue for speculation is now so limited that it is not surprising that Stock Exchange interest fell back this week on tobacco shares. It is too much to expect liveliness in the "heavy industrials" on the eve of the Coal Report. Tobacco shares have long been the Stock Exchange stand-by, but this week there has been particularly keen buying of British American, and of Carreras on the rumour of fabulous profits. The following summary of tobacco earnings is undoubtedly impressive:—

	Dividend.	Net profit after payment of Debenture			Carried Forward
		To Interest.	Reserve.	£	
British American Tobacco Co.					
Year to Sept. 30, 1924	...	26½ % free	4,866,265	—	3,914,115
Year to Sept. 30, 1925	...	27 11-12% free	5,145,238	—	4,246,576
Carreras, Limited.					
Year to Oct. 31, 1924	...	50 % free	479,846	126,911 (a)	351,763
Year to Oct. 31, 1925	...	50 % free	773,153	142,473 (b)	482,443
Imperial Tobacco Co.					
Year to Oct. 31, 1924	...	22½ % free	8,369,061	750,000	549,264
Year to Oct. 31, 1925	...	24 % free	8,884,990	750,000	643,639
(a) £240,000 and (b) £120,000 of these amounts were appropriated to ordinary shares capital account.					

The outstanding feature of this statement is the extraordinary 60 per cent. rise in the profits of Carreras. In 1924 this Company paid 50 per cent. tax free, and distributed a capital bonus of 100 per cent., and in 1925 it repeated its distribution of 50 per cent. tax free on its doubled capital, and further distributed a capital bonus of 25 per cent., thereby bringing up its ordinary share capital from £480,000 to £600,000. Its total issued capital is now £900,000, consisting of £600,000 Ordinary shares (of which £300,000 are "A" shares carrying no voting rights), £50,000 in 6 per cent. Cumulative Preference shares of £1, £50,000 in 6 per cent. Cumulative "A" Preference shares of £1, and £200,000 7 per cent. Cumulative "B" Preference shares. It is rumoured on the Stock Exchange that the profits of Carreras this year will again show a 60 per cent. increase, but, disregarding rumours, it is significant that the amount carried forward of £482,443 is nearly sufficient, after allowing for the £120,000 appropriated to capital account, to pay the preference dividends (£20,000), and 50 per cent. tax free on the increased ordinary capital. It is, therefore, only necessary to count upon a maintenance of profits in order to assume a dividend of 50 per cent. tax free, which would allow a yield of £4 6s. tax free on the old ordinary shares standing at £12½. And supposing fortune still follows Mr. Bernard Baron, another share bonus distribution is likely. It must be admitted that to purchase an independent tobacco company's shares at so large a premium smacks of buying inflated newspaper shares whose greatest asset is goodwill. For the last three years Carreras, like the other tobacco companies, has written nothing off goodwill. The Company must spend enormous sums on advertising their cigarettes and tobacco mixtures, and perhaps goodwill stands fairly valued at £203,800, while cash, £224,788, War Loan, £9,500, debtors, £600,923, and stocks, £874,470, total £1,709,681, against creditors, £329,986. It is remarkable that the goodwill of the British American Tobacco Company stands at only £200,000, while that of the Imperial Tobacco Company, with little more than twice its capital, stands at £9,500,000.

\* \* \*

The oil share market has had little chance of responding to the rise in American oil prices. Following upon the V.O.C. dispute, comes a lawsuit against

some of the former directors of the British Controlled Oilfields. The rise in the price of petrol in this country is, however, significant. It comes after a period of stability lasting seventeen months. From the fact that last year, when American oil prices were rising, the price of petrol remained stationary here, we draw the conclusion that those who control the large petrol companies now believe that the economic situation has at last changed for the better. The rise of 1d. per gallon here is moderate seeing that American petrol prices have gone up by at least 2d. a gallon, but this may be due to caution as well as restraint on the part of the petrol companies. Higher crude oil prices call out the wildcatters, and until the results of the larger drilling operations that are now being undertaken are known, it is not wise to take too long a view of the oil industry. For the time being there is every prospect of further price advances.

\* \* \*

On Monday of this week the feeling was voiced that the rubber share market had touched bottom. That is doubtful, but it may be observed that no large stocks have been accumulated. London stocks in the last month have fallen on balance, dealers' stocks in Penang and Singapore declined in January from 18,840 tons to 15,726 tons, while imports into Malaya, mostly from Dutch East Indian native sources, in January were 3,721 tons smaller at 10,337 tons. An increasing quantity of rubber coming forward for sale in London is what is known as "off grades" and "scrap," which suggests that if the estates had been able to harvest the full quantity of first-grade rubber when the percentage allowed for export was 85, there would have been no necessity to ship this increasing quantity of "off grades."

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